# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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# THESIS

**FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA: THE EMERGENCE OF THE 'NEW MACEDONIAN QUESTION' IN THE REMAINS OF SECOND YUGOSLAVIA. SURVIVABILITY OF THE NEW POST-COLD WAR STATE IN THE BALKANS.**

by

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December 2001

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The recent (2001) crisis inside the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) concerning its Albanian ethnic minority did not come as a surprise to the southeastern European as well as the international security chessboard. It had nearly been predicted from the first years of the new state's independent life, and confirmed by most analysts during and after the war in Kosovo (1998-99).

This thesis will examine the survivability of the small post-cold war Balkan state, in relation to the historical background of the 'Macedonian Question', the so-called 'Macedonian Identity', the resurgence of nationalist inclinations in the area, the ethnic minorities (especially the Albanian one), the economy, and the regional (four neighboring states) as well as the international relations of FYROM.

The author will argue that prevention of conflict in FYROM is urgent for the stability of all the Balkans, and has to be coordinated from the international community towards all governmental and non-governmental actors involved. Integration of FYROM into European institutions provides a reliable measure. Respect and protection of human/civil rights of minorities, as well as democratization of the civilian sector are also dominant factors for the survival of the multi-ethnic nation. Ethnic minorities should finally develop proper political, social, and economic relationships with majority populations in order to work together for the common well being.

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# FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA: THE EMERGENCE OF THE 'NEW MACEDONIAN QUESTION' IN THE REMAINS OF SECOND YUGOSLAVIA. SURVIVABILITY OF THE NEW POST-COLD WAR STATE IN THE BALKANS.

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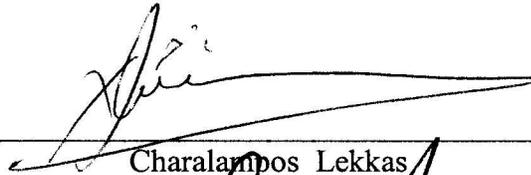
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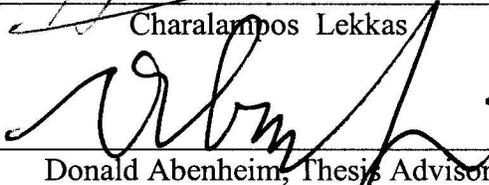
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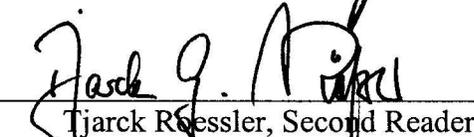
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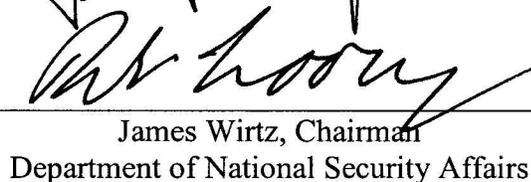
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# ABSTRACT

The recent (2001) crisis inside the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) concerning it's Albanian ethnic minority did not come as a surprise to the southeastern European as well as the international security chessboard. It had nearly been predicted from the first years of the new state's independent life, and confirmed by most analysts during and after the war in Kosovo (1998-99).

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This thesis would not be complete without our Lord's help.

I would first like to dedicate it to the memory of my grandfather Charalampos Lekkas. May God rest his soul in peace.

I would also like to dedicate it to my parents, Andreas and Helene, and to my wife Evita for their continuous support, love, and guidance, even though thousands of miles away.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The most recent (2001) crisis inside the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) concerning the grievances of the country's Albanian ethnic minority did not come as a surprise to observers and political analyzers of the European as well as of the international security community. It had been predicted almost from the very beginning when the new state achieved independence in 1991, and undoubtedly it was confirmed during the war in Kosovo between 1998-99. The state has been continuously plagued by serious internal and external political and economic challenges during its short existence. Had it not been for the continuous financial aid from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), or specific programs to stabilize the value of the currency to a German Mark benchmark, FYROM would have collapsed.

The attitude of international institutions and organizations as well as states towards FYROM has varied, but the main factor has been the effects of the surrounding Balkan crises, especially that of Kosovo, and that relations with its neighbors have not been easy in general.

This thesis poses the research question of the survivability of this small post-cold war state in the tough neighborhood of the Balkans, and attempts to give answers taking under consideration important factors like the historical background of the 'Macedonian Question' throughout the ages, the so-called 'Macedonian Identity' which was definitely one of Tito's political inventions, the resurgence of nationalism in the area during the recent decades, the ethnic minorities inside FYROM with special attention paid to the Albanian minority that constitutes almost one third of the population, the economy of the new state, and finally the regional as well as the international (EU, UN, NATO) relations of the country as regards the four neighboring states of Greece, Serbia, Albania, and Bulgaria. Secondary sources such as books, journals and internet sites have been used as research tools throughout the thesis.

The author will finally argue that preventing conflict in FYROM is vital for the stability of the entire Balkan region, and has to be coordinated from the international

community and institutions, with both governmental and non-governmental actors involved in order to avoid any duplication of effort that could cause the opposite results than those desired. Clearly, the political will of international organizations or individual countries involved in the prevention of conflict is one of the main factors. Integration of FYROM into European institutions and organizations would definitely be a stabilizing force. As national identities are already 'rediscovered' in this area, the role of politicians must be to avoid ethnic or territorial irredentas and work towards the respect and protection of human and civil rights of minorities, as well as the democratization of the civilian sector that are decisive factors for the survival of the multi-ethnic state.

Ethnic minorities should develop proper political, social, and economic relationships with majority populations in order to work together for the common well being. In this way, security will be mutual for all of them. A long-lasting peace and stability in FYROM will be one decisive step for the Balkans to gradually drop its reputation as the 'powder keg' of Europe.

# I.     INTRODUCTION

## A.     GENERAL

The national states of the Balkan area, in which the long submerged nations of southeastern Europe regained their freedom and independence, represented an apparent triumph of self-determination –apparent only because the great powers, after contributing to the liberation of the Christian peoples of the peninsula, continued to interfere with their difficult problems. The troubles, which resulted from such a situation, were soon used as an argument against national self-determination. The loose talk about a threatening 'Balkanization' of Europe by the creation of new small states was and is not only unfair to the Balkan nations –some of the oldest in Europe- but an obstacle to any unprejudiced approach to the claims for self-determination in the region north of the Balkans [1]

As one of the states emerging from the collapse of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, between 1990 and 1995, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) has always attracted from time to time newspaper and other media attention in connection with the long dispute about its name, or the most recent (2001) crisis caused by the grievances of its Albanian ethnic minority.  However, very little scholarly study has been done in comparison to the other Balkan state neighbors, the international community, the economic situation of the new state, or finally the survivability of this state when considering all the aforementioned factors.

Yet, FYROM's territory occupies a strategic area often called as 'the buffer state of southern Balkans', and the 'Macedonian Question' has been historically one of the most difficult in Balkan conflicts. It has been also argued that whoever controls FYROM controls the economy of the southern Balkans as the state lies on important transportation routes from Central Europe to the Aegean Sea and from Istanbul to the Adriatic Sea.

The 'question' over Macedonia emerged again as a factor during the Kosovo crisis in 1998. The years since September 1991, when the small Balkan state separated from Yugoslavia, have seen FYROM establishing itself almost successfully in the formal sense, and gaining diplomatic recognition under the provisional name of the 'Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia' for the major international organizations (UN, EU) as well as some states, or as the 'Republic of Macedonia' for some others.  However, this

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[1] O. Halecki, The Millennium of Europe, University of Notre Dame Press, 1963, p. 335.

new state has existed and has been mostly plagued by serious internal and external political and economic challenges. FYROM's economy would have collapsed if the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had not extended continuous financial aid and specific programs to stabilize the value of the currency against a German Mark benchmark.

It is a matter of debate, especially among Anglo-Americans after the Dayton Peace Agreement of 1995, as to what extent a 'new Macedonian Question' has appeared in the wake of the second Yugoslavia. It is, however, beyond any doubt that this small and weak state has encountered many difficulties as a result of the long-running Balkan crisis, and is suffering severe internal ethnic friction and violent outbreaks involving the Albanian ethnic minority which comprises 25-30% of the population.

The attitude of the international community towards FYROM and its government has varied, but the main factor has been the effects of the surrounding Balkan crisis (especially Kosovo), and the fact that relations with its neighbors have generally not been easy. Many of the difficulties are related to the name and symbols of the state (Greece), border specifications, religion and cross border trade (Serbia), minority and education issues (Albania), and finally minority and language problems (Bulgaria).

At this time, there is certainly a government in Macedonia deeply committed to a Europe without borders and to a European perspective for its country. However, there are also political and economic pressures both external and internal that are encouraging disintegration and violence. People from FYROM, as well as from some of the other new states of Eastern Europe, have to be integrated into at least part of the western European framework as quickly as possible. One argument is that Western Europe should strive for greater union, both politically and economically, without the other states. Incorporating them now could cause severe problems as German unification has shown. Economically, this might be attractive, but politically it is a mistake. Eastern Europe, and especially the Balkans, cannot be left to their own devices and allowed to fall into violence and chaos. Yugoslavia has shown what is at stake. The international community and other organizations should become deeply involved rather than being poor arbiters of the competing claims of the new nationalism in this area. The challenge of survival that

FYROM, a small and weak state, faces is a challenge for all western institutions and ideals. The neighborhood is tough. So must be the initiatives.

## B.    STRUCTURE OF THESIS

This study is organized in four parts. The first part provides an historical background of the Macedonian question throughout the ages, as well as some political geography elements of the area. A special section it dedicated to the more recent events from the creation of FYROM until the second half of 2001.

The second part starts by briefly defining the general terms of ethnicity and nationality, and then proceeds very carefully to the heart of the 'Macedonian' identity problem, and then to FYROM's ethnic minority issues.

The third part discusses issues concerning contemporary political and economic aspects of the new Balkan state and pays special attention to the economy of the state and to the existing relations with the four neighboring states of Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Albania, as well as with several international actors such as the UN, EU and NATO.

Finally, the last part forms the author's conclusions for the survivability of the state of FYROM in the Balkans, as well as the attitude of other regional or international political actors towards it.

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## II. THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION

## A. HISTORY AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

Few areas in the world are so interesting to political geographers as Macedonia. The unique variety of populations situated at a major strategic crossroads, the troubled history, and the desperate struggle of the surrounding Balkan states for the control of Macedonian lands, have historically made Macedonia a political geography lab area.[2] Geographic Macedonia is part of the states of Greece, Bulgaria and FYROM. Yet, as a geopolitical area, "hardly two scholars can be found to agree on its exact delineation although many agree on its general location."[3] A Macedonian State has not existed from the days of the Kings of Macedon ($4^{th}$ century BC) until the emergence of FYROM in 1991. During that time, Macedonia belonged successively to the Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire, the medieval Bulgarian and Serbian Empires, the Ottoman Empire, and the state of Yugoslavia. As a result its borders fluctuated.

The usually accepted geographical area of Macedonia is the territory bounded, in the north by the hills north of Skopje and by the Shar mountains; in the east by the Rila and Rhodope mountains; in the south by the Aegean Sea around Thessaloniki (Salonika), by the Olympus and Pindus mountains; and in the west by Lakes Prespa and Ochrid. These boundaries comply with a conventional definition of Macedonia as the area covering the Greek region of Macedonia, the territory of FYROM, and the Bulgarian region around Blagoevgrad.[4] As G. Prevelakis precisely states:

> If we wished to enter into a more substantial discussion of the meaning of Macedonia, it would be necessary to study the use of the name as a political or administrative term in the states or empires of the past. Such a research would show that the extent of Macedonia has varied substantially through time. Thus, for example, in the Roman Empire, the province of Macedonia covered not only the geographical Macedonia as we have defined it, but also all of southern Greece, as well as the territories of Albania.[5]

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[2] G. Prevelakis, Les Balkans: culture et geopolitique, Nathan, Paris 1994.

[3] D. Perry, Macedonia, Published in: G. Stokes, "Nationalism in the Balkans", Garland Publishing Inc., New York 1984, p. 175.

[4] E. Kofos, Nationalism and Communism in Macedonia, Institute for Balkan Studies, Salonika 1964, p. 3.

[5] G. Prevelakis, The return of the Macedonian Question, Published in: F. Carter & H. Norris, "The Changing

The geographic Macedonia of today has a total population of about 5 million people, which is a little more than 2 million in each of the Greek and FYROM regions, and about 400,000 in its Bulgarian region)[6], and a total area of about 67,000 square kilometers[7]. This area is mainly mountainous and hilly lands, producing cereals, tobacco, sheep, chrome mines, and some lead, pyrites, zinc and copper. The plain northwest of Thessaloniki, in Greek Macedonia, is now a large wheat-producing area, while on the other hand, Bulgarian Macedonia is rich in timber.

Macedonia is structured around two major elements. The first is the valley of Vardar (Axios for the Greeks) and the southern part of the Morava-Vardar corridor, which is a direct path from the Danube River to the Aegean Sea. The second element is the city of Thessaloniki (Salonika), which is a perfect Mediterranean port, and the road to Athens, Istanbul and the Morava-Vardar corridor. The main economic and strategic importance of Macedonia results from controlling two valuable routes of the Balkans, or the east-west route from the Adriatic to the Aegean and Istanbul, and the north-south route from central Europe to Thessaloniki and the Aegean. By far the most important crossroads of the Balkans, and undoubtedly the wealthiest city in Macedonia, is Thessaloniki (Salonika). The next most important city of the Macedonian area, but far behind, is Skopje, the capital of FYROM. Otherwise, the towns of Macedonia are small country market towns, such as Florina and Seres in Greece, Bitola (Monastir) and Veles in FYROM, or Petrich in Bulgaria.

There is no doubt that the history of Macedonia is of great interest to anyone who thoroughly enjoys studying the core of an area from which Alexander the Great had set out to conquer the known world, and where Spartacus had begun his slave revolt. This is an area characterized as an historical and geographical reactor furnace.

The earliest human remains in Macedonia date from the Mousterian times, and along with similar remains found in Thessaly and Epirus (territories in Greece), show the first signs of human life in the lands that correspond to modern Greece. The first signs of

Shape of the Balkans", Westview Press, Colorado 1996, p. 133.

[6] Ibid, p. 134.

[7] E. Barker, The origin of the Macedonian dispute, Published in: "Macedonia: Its place in Balkan Power Politics", Royal Institute of International Affairs, London 1950.

continuous human occupation date from the Neolithic period, carbon-dated to 6200 BC in the Macedonian coastal plain. This civilization lasted about 1000 years and maintained contacts with western Anatolia. At the end of this period, a culture characterized by the use of 'barbotine' pottery (clay marked with the finger nail) appeared in northern Thessaly and western Greece, probably originating from Macedonia. These Protohellenic tribes are thought to have broken away from the main bulk of the family of Indo-European peoples some time in the 5th millennium B.C. and to have spread throughout the area known today as Northern Greece. They marked the first of many interactions between Greece, the central Balkans and Anatolia[8].

In the early centuries of the second millennium BC three basic groups of Greek speaking peoples can be distinguished: a) the Southeastern group (the Ionians), b) the Eastern group (Arcadians and Aeolians) and c) the Western group (the "Makednoi"). This western group split from the others. One faction pushed into Central Greece and the Peloponnese. Another established itself in Doris (the Dorians). A third part moved to Thessaly, while a fourth, the Macedonians, spread out through the regions which today are called Western, Southern and Central Macedonia.[9] This group, Greek-speaking like the others, did not move south, and for some centuries remained outside of the great cultural development of its related peoples who had come into contact with highly-developed Creto-insular populations of the south.

The geographic and climatic differences, especially between southern Greece and upper Macedonia with its continental climate were another factor which helped keep Macedonia on the fringes of the Greek culture. Macedonia remained peripheral to the ensuing great changes of the south until the fourth century BC.[10] Yet, all the ancient writers classify the Macedonians among the Greek-speaking family of peoples.

In about the seventh century BC, one of the Macedonian tribes living in southern Macedonia expanded its sphere of influence into the coastal planes of lower Macedonia, which became the kingdom of Macedonia and whose descendants were the "Macedones"

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[8] N. Hammond, A history of Greece to 322 BC, Oxford University Press, 1967.

[9] The Dorians and the Macedonians belong to the ethnolinguistic group of the Makednoi, from which the Dorians split away to seek their fortunes in the south.

[10] H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 12.

of the Classical period. Their rulers worshipped Greek gods, especially Zeus and Heracles[11]. In the early 5th century, the royal house of Macedon was recognized as Greek by the presidents of the Olympic games.

By this time the Macedonians had begun breaking out of their isolation as the influence of the developed south penetrated into their land through increasing land and sea communication. The Macedonian world was the scene of rapid cultural development, reaching its peak in the reigns of Kings Amyntas, Philip II, and Alexander the Great[12]. Recent linguistic analyses, archaeological research, and a huge number of purely Greek names are today's proof that there was never any break in the close ties of the Macedonians with the rest of the Greeks. Alexander's campaign into Asia, with the undoubted promulgation of Greek culture, language, and spirit to the borders of what is today known as India, provides the best confirmation of the above expansion.

Alexander the Great ruled from 359 to 336 BC. After his untimely death, his successors (the Epigonoi) continued to rule the huge conquests for almost two centuries, and it was only after the battle of Pydna in 168 BC that Macedonia ceased to exist as an independent state and became a Roman province. Its territories were divided into four semi-autonomous regions[13], but were eventually incorporated as a Roman province in 146 BC after repeated uprisings.

The expansion and consolidation of Roman power made the Balkans and Macedonia a border region, marking the zone between Latin and Greek-speaking cultures, and between western and eastern halves of the empire. Despite Roman rule, Macedonian provinces prospered and attracted new colonists from the East and from Italy. For the first time, Jewish communities appeared in the area. During the 3rd century A.D. there were successive invasions of the Goths and other related tribes, but these attacks did not lead to ethnological changes.

In 324 A.D. Byzantium became the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. Its northern border was along the river Drina (between Serbia and Bosnia). Thus, the whole of Macedonia remained in the eastern half. This had a positive effect on the further

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[11] H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London, 2000, p. 13.

[12] Society of Macedonian studies, Macedonia: history and politics, Ekdotike Athenon, 1991, p. 8.

[13] Society of Macedonian studies, Macedonia: History and politics, Ekdotike Athenon, 1991, p. 9.

development of Macedonia and particularly on that of its capital, Thessaloniki, which soon grew to the point where it was regarded as the second most important city of the Byzantine Empire[14]. The city organized a region whose limits stopped where the influence of other centers began with Constantinople to the east and Belgrade to the north.

The Slavs first came to Macedonia in the 6th century A.D. where they found a mainly Greek speaking population. During the 7th century Finno-Tartar tribes (the Proto-Bulgars) followed the Slavs into the Balkans, and soon started their struggle against Byzantium. In the second half of the 9th century the Bulgarian Tsar Boris overran part of Macedonia, and in the early part of the 10th century the Bulgarian Tsar Simeon gained complete possession except for the Aegean coast.[15] In the latter part of the 10th century, after a brief return to Byzantium, Tsar Samuel, whom Serb historians claim as the first 'Macedonian' Tsar[16], won a big empire including Macedonia, but it later became part of Byzantium. It was during this period that a Bulgarian Patriarchate was first established at Orchid.

Later Macedonia or parts of it were continuously changing from Byzantine to Bulgarian rule until the 13th and 14th centuries. The country then came under the Serbian Tsars, of which the greatest was Stephan Dushan, who made Skopje his capital. In 1346 the Archbishop of Serbia took the title of 'Patriarch of the Serbs and the Greeks'. However, on the death of Stephan Dushan, the Serbian Empire collapsed. The Turks invaded the Balkans, and after the battles of Maritsa (1371) and Kosovo (1389)[17] Macedonia came under Turkish rule.[18]

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[14] Ibid., p. 9.

[15] At this point it should be noted that there is considerable controversy amongst scholars concerning the extent of the 'Bulgarisation' of Slav tribes which had settled in parts of Macedonia. Fyrom's historians maintain that there were no Bulgars in Macedonia during the Middle Ages.

[16] T. Georgevitch, Macedonia, Allen & Unwin, London, Chap. III

[17] T. Judah, The Serbs, Yale University Press, 2000, p. 31.

[18] This short-lived empire had no effective impact on the ethnological nature of Macedonia, as Professor A. Vakalopoulos explains in his book "History of Macedonia". Serbian rule left in its passage a few more Slav enclaves, which reinforced the strata of Slav population already there. More importantly, however, Serbian rule left behind it tales of a great, though transient, empire. It should be noted that these recollections of a glorious past played their part in inciting the national awakening of the Serbs in the 19th century to put claims on Macedonia. A similar process occurred with the national awakening of the Bulgarians, who, during the 19th century, laid claim to the title deeds of Macedonia by virtue of its short-lived occupation by Tsar Samuel.

It is, perhaps, necessary to emphasize that during the Byzantine era and later in the Ottoman period, the term "Macedonia" had lost its former geographical implications. According to many historians such as Amantos and Vakalopoulos, the Byzantine authors often applied the term Macedonia to areas including the greater part of modern Albania, Northern Thrace and regions of what is today Greek Thrace. The fact that the term "Macedonian" had in Byzantine times lost the national and even the geographical meaning it had had in antiquity can be proven since the Byzantine Emperors "Macedonian Dynasty" actually consisted of princes from Thrace.

In 1453 Constantinople fell to the Ottomans and in 1459 they suppressed the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate and placed the administration of the Church under the Bulgarian Archbishop of Ochrid. The Archbishops were by that time Greeks. In 1557 the Serbian Patriarchate was restored with its seat at Ipek, but in 1766 it was suppressed again. In 1777 the Bulgarian Archbishopric of Orchid ceased to be an autocephalous church, and the Greek Patriarchate was placed in control of both Slav churches by the Ottomans. Thus, from this time until 1870, the Greek clergy had spiritual control of the Orthodox population of Macedonia.

Nearly ten centuries of national ecclesiastical controversies, which the Ottomans had successfully handled, lead locally to the creation of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870. During the 19th century, controversies had taken a serious nationalist character, as the Serbs and Greeks achieved at least partial liberation from the Ottomans, and the Bulgarians experienced their national awakening, in which Macedonians played a considerable role. At the same time, the great powers, watching the imminent collapse of the Ottoman Empire, became highly interested in the Balkans, and by 1870 Russia had chosen Bulgaria as the best avenue to expand its influence.

The Macedonian question came into being when, during this year, Russia successfully pressed the Ottomans to allow the formation of a separate Bulgarian Orthodox Church, or Exarchate, with authority over parts of the Ottoman province of Macedonia. This action rapidly involved Bulgaria in the geopolitical arena in dispute with both Greece and Serbia. The Greek Patriarch of Constantinople declared the new autocephalous Bulgarian church to be schismatic, and the Greeks contested the expanding

of Bulgarian cultural, ecclesiastical, and national influence in Macedonia. The Serbian government complained to the Ottomans about this decision, and after their war with Turkey in 1876, they also tried to fight Bulgarian expansionism. The three-sided contest for Macedonia had already begun. It was first, by priests and teachers, later by paramilitary groups, and after them by organized armies. This contest has lasted one way or another until the present.

This was not a result planned by Russia in 1870. Russia wanted to expand its own sphere of influence into the Balkans through the Orthodox Church and through the support of the oppressed Slav peoples. Russia had the choice of Serbia or Bulgaria as main policy instruments. Greece was a non-Slav country and so less suitable to its purpose. Bulgaria was geographically closer to Russia, and it could control the approaches to Constantinople, the Aegean, the Dardanelles, and Salonika through Macedonia. Bulgaria was also dependent on Russian aid for liberation from Turkey and so was more obedient than Serbia. Serbia was more remote, had no access to Adriatic at that time, had already declared independence, and was after all closer to the Austro-Hungarian sphere of influence. Thus, the Russian choice was Bulgaria. This issue started a rivalry between the two Slav Balkan nations, which has been an obstacle to Russian aspirations for the Balkans.

While the creation of the Exarchate is usually accepted as the beginning of the Macedonian question, this, like almost everything else, is disputed. Serbian historians say that the Bulgarian incursion into Macedonia had started some years earlier. Many others believe that the origin of the problem lies in the San Stefano Treaty of 1878, by which Russia gave nearly all Slav Macedonia to the Bulgarians.[19] While all this seems serious enough, Russia's sponsorship of the Bulgarian Exarchate was the main reason.

The Macedonian dispute developed quickly. In 1872, the new Bulgarian church acquired the additional ecclesiastical districts of Skopje and Ochrid which as was declared in Article 10 of the Turkish degree of 1870 by which areas where two thirds of the population wished to join the Exarchate could do so. In the same year, the Greek

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[19] In this year Russian Tsar Alexander II's war to liberate Bulgaria from the Turks had resulted in the defeat of Turkish forces. In the town of San Stefano (on the Sea of Marmara, now called Yesilkoy), Count Ignatiev, the Russian ambassador to Sultan Abdul Hamid II dictated a treaty to the Turks from which rose the "Principality of Bulgaria" (an independent re-creation of the medieval Bulgarian kingdom).

Patriarchate declared the Bulgarian Exarchate as schismatic. The Bulgarians, however, considered this an opportunity to send Bulgarian nationalist priests and teachers throughout Slav Macedonia. The Greeks, and later the Serbs, used the same methods. These pioneer priests and teachers were supported by armed groups called 'komitadjis' (committee men). The government in Sofia unofficially sponsored them, and something similar happened in Athens and Belgrade. Although these paramilitary groups were theoretically formed to fight against the Turks, they attacked Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbs and often betrayed each other to the Turkish authorities[20].

The Treaty of San Stefano (1878) gave Bulgaria enormous lands which have awakened Bulgarian nationalist dreams ever since. Bulgaria received nearly all of Slav Macedonia, including Vranje, Skopje, Tetovo, Gostivar, the Black Drin, Debar, and Lake Ochrid which today is southeast Albania, the northern part of Greek Macedonia, and a small strip of the Aegean coast west of Salonica. It was a large gift that was taken back before the end of the year by the other great powers and who pushed Russia to abandon San Stefano and negotiate the Treaty of Berlin restoring Macedonia to Turkey once again.[21] It was obvious that the union of Macedonia with Bulgaria created a new, powerful, pro-Russian state in the Balkans that Germany, Great Britain, and Austro-Hungary would not accept. The German Chancellor Prince Otto von Bismarck-Schonhausen convened a meeting in Berlin called the Congress of Berlin to settle this, and other, Great Power issues.[22]

Bismarck in this Congress tried to warn both Great Britain and the Habsburgs, first that London should make greater efforts to keep Russia out of the Balkans and second that Austro-Hungary should not expect Germany to help them in a possible military engagement with Russia over Bulgarian lands. Germany was not at that time interested in becoming involved there. The British delegate to the Congress, Benjamin

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[20] N. Martis, The falsification of the History of Macedonia, Euroekdotike, Athens 1983, p. 71.

[21] From the Treaty of San Stefano, the "Principality of Bulgaria" arose, which in fact was a re-creation of the medieval Bulgarian kingdom.

[22] Bismarck, with his cynical attitude used to say that: "the whole of the Balkans is not worth the healthy bones of a single Pomeranian musketeer".

Disraeli, made it clear to Russia that the vision of a "Greater Bulgaria" would be a "causus beli" for Britain.[23]

The Treaty of Berlin left Bulgaria with its unsatisfied ambitions[24]. Its southern half became a Turkish province with local autonomy under a Bulgarian Orthodox governor, and the Treaty of San Stefano seemed to never have existed. In return, Russia took new lands in Bessarabia and in northeastern Anatolia. The Treaty of Berlin also granted full independence to the Serbs, gave Cyprus to Great Britain, and transferred Bosnia from the Ottomans to Austro-Hungary, an action that was the immediate cause of World War I.

Within Macedonia, the Treaty of Berlin sparked an orgy of violence overnight.[25] In 1895, Macedonian refugees in Sofia founded a 'Supreme Committee' to organize the struggle against the Turks for the 'liberation' of Macedonia which meant its annexation to Bulgaria. The Committee soon became linked with the Bulgarian government. It is obvious now that a Macedonian national consciousness emerged in the 19th century among a number of young Macedonian Slavs educated in Bulgarian Exarchist schools. These increasing radical youngsters formed reading and discussion circles, and thus passive behaviors gradually became more radical and aggressive, which resulted in the creation of another Macedonian body in the town of Shtip, southeast of Skopje or the Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (MRO)[26], led by two young Macedonian nationalist schoolteachers, Damian Gruev and Gotse Delchev.[27]

MRO spread very fast in the 1890s, and received its money from the Bulgarian regime, or through bank robberies and kidnappings for ransom.[28] From the beginning, two trends appeared with the MRO. One consisted very close collaboration with the Supreme Committee and through it with the Bulgarian Tsar. Its real aim was a future Bulgarian annexation of Macedonia and later it developed into the extreme nationalist

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[23] R. Kaplan, Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History, Vintage Books, New York 1996, p. 54.

[24] However Bulgarian nationalists were furious with this outcome, and continued to regard Macedonia as 'Bulgaria irredenta' through the 1890s and the first half of the 20th century.

[25] R. Kaplan, Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History, Vintage Books, New York 1996, p. 55.

[26] According to Jens Reuter, MRO was established in Salonica in 1893. Beyond that, MRO later became known as VMRO (IMRO) after taking on its additional attribute 'Internal'.

[27] R. Kaplan, Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History, Vintage Books, New York 1996, p. 56.

[28] Ibid, p. 57.

right wing of the movement. The other trend, or the 'Macedonisti', sought the creation of a separate and independent Macedonian state. This wing preached the brotherhood of all the peoples of Macedonia, not only Slavs but also Albanians, Greeks and Turks[29] and tried to distanced itself from the Supreme Committee and the Bulgarian government. This trend developed into the left wing of the movement.

MRO (or VMRO) at first worked in secret by organizing and arming the people of Macedonia, which by the turn of the century, was a power vacuum of sectarian violence. It fought not only against the Osmanli regime, but also against Greek and Serbian claims to Macedonia. Then, in August 1903, IMRO (VMRO) became openly visible on St. Elijah's day and rose against Turkish garrisons and officials in Macedonia. This was called the Ilinden uprising. Some authors argue that this uprising was forced on the Bulgarian War Office due to Russian encouragement. However, the more moderate IMRO leaders thought it was not the right time to act. Yugoslavia and Bulgaria reflect on the Ilinden events with great pride and consider it a high point in the struggle for the national liberation of Macedonian Slavs. In the end, the Turkish army crushed the rebels, burned 9,830 houses and left 60,953 people homeless[30]. The uprising at least succeeded in leading to the intervention of the great powers in Macedonia. All the powers except Germany agreed to take control of a gendarmerie zone in Macedonia[31].

In July 1908 the Young Turk revolution broke out[32], and the new rulers of Turkey, who were liberals, countered the attempts of the great powers to intervene in Macedonia. However, the Young Turks, after initial promises of progress, turned out to be extreme nationalists[33], and the future of Macedonians turned to be rather worse than before the revolution. Thus, in the second half of the 19th century, Macedonia found itself

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[29] The first article of its rule was: "Everyone who lives in European Turkey, regardless of sex, nationality, or personal beliefs, may become a member of IMRO" (E. Barker, The origin of the Macedonian dispute, Published in: Macedonia: Its place in Balkan Power Politics, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London 1950).

[30] G. Bazhdaroff, The Macedonian Question, Sofia 1926, p. 13.

[31] A. Grant & H. Temperley, Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Longmans, London 1939, p. 452.

[32] The most important ideological movement in modern Turkey saw the light in Salonika.

[33] The Young Turk Revolution did not heighten national consciousness among the Slavs in Macedonia. Their new regime ignored all nationality considerations save those of the Turks (D. Perry: "Macedonia").

at the intersection of the spheres of influence of the three cores of nationalism that had been formed in the southern Balkans: Serbian, Bulgarian, and Greek.[34]

In 1912, a unique incident took place. The small Balkan powers of Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro forgot their differences, formed an alliance, ignored the Great Powers who said they would not permit changes in the status quo, and drove the Turks out of Macedonia. Several factors helped create this alliance. First, Russia had succeeded in temporarily reconciling with Bulgaria and Serbia[35], and then Greece had found an unusually broad-minded leader in Prime Minister E. Venizelos. The shakiest aspect of the alliance was the Serbo-Bulgarian Agreement of 3 March 1912 concerning the partition of Macedonia. The Greek-Bulgarian Treaty of May 1912 made no territorial arrangements. Thus, Greece's share of Macedonia was left undefined. It is interesting that none of the three Balkan states apparently ever thought that Macedonia, once liberated from the Turks, should be independent or autonomous.

Bulgaria was the country that launched an attack during the Second Balkan War. Serbia and Greece counter-attacked, and Turkey and Romania also attacked Bulgaria. Bulgaria was badly defeated and was only able to retain a little corner of Macedonia from the Treaty of Bucharest (August 1913), while Serbia kept all the areas occupied by its army. The Treaty was also a bad blow to the Macedonian 'Supreme Committee' and the IMRO as many of their members had supported Bulgaria.

During WW I (and from 1914, Bulgaria joined the Central Powers who had already been working closely for some months with IMRO[36], while Serbia and Greece had joined the Entente. Bulgaria occupied the entire area of Serbian Macedonia and the eastern part of the Greek area of Macedonia, and had no intention of making them autonomous. Instead, they started to 'Bulgarising' the Slavs of Macedonia. In 1918 situation changed once again as the Central Powers were defeated. Bulgaria lost not only all of Serbian Macedonia but also the Strumica valley and 'Aegean Macedonia' as well. Thus, the end of WW I found Macedonia partitioned into three. Bulgaria had a small

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[34] G. Prevelakis, The Return of the Macedonian Question, Published in: F. Carter & H. Norris, The Changing Shape of the Balkans, Westview Press, Colorado 1996, p. 136.

[35] A. Grant & H. Temperley, Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Longmans, London 1939, p. 472.

[36] J. Swire, Bulgarian Conspiracy, Hale, London 1939, p. 133.

corner consisting of 6,789 sq. km or 10.11%, while Serbia had 25,714 sq. km or 38.32%, and Greece 34,603 sq. km or 51.57%.[37] It was not surprising that under those circumstances Bulgaria became the base for Macedonian terrorist activities that poisoned its relations with the new government of Yugoslavia, and to a lesser extend with that of Greece for the next quarter of a century.

During the inter-war years of 1914-1925, the enormous movements of population which took place in Macedonian territory changed the ethnological composition of the area. From the Greek area, tens of thousands of Bulgarians left by virtue of a voluntary exchange of populations between Greece and Bulgaria, and only the Slav speaking people remained principally in the western part. Greece regarded them, which in any case was not more than 100,000, as Slav speaking Greeks. After the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 and the end of the traditional Greek policy of the 'Great Idea', Greek Macedonia experienced difficulties at first in absorbing the influx of refugees from Asia Minor and the coasts of the Black Sea.[38] In the Bulgarian part, the entry of large numbers of refugees from the Serbian and Greek zones caused social and political conflict. These populations were sharply irredentist and their feelings fed the political revanchism of successive governments in Sofia throughout the inter-war period.

After the ethnological restoration of Greek Macedonia, it was only natural that disputes over the 'Macedonian question' in the inter-war period should shift principally to the fate of the population of Yugoslavian Macedonia. The plans of Bulgaria, and to a lesser extent those of Serbia, for Greek Macedonia and Thrace no longer involved the liberation of ethnically kin populations, but were a matter of geopolitical calculation and the search for an outlet to the Aegean Sea.

In the early 1920s, of all the Balkan States, Bulgaria appeared the most likely to be on the verge of attempting to repeat the Soviet experiment. Thus, Comintern, the international Communist movement orchestrated from Moscow, adopted the view of the Bulgarian communists on the Macedonian issue and hoped to win over the aggrieved masses of the Bulgarian-Macedonian refugees to the cause of communist revolution.

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[37] Macedonia: 4000 Years of Greek History and Civilization, Ekdotike Athinon, Athens 1983, p. 484.

[38] These Ionian Greeks were later to play a leading role in the economic and social upsurge of modern Greece and its people (Society of Macedonian Studies, Macedonia: History and Politics, Ekdotike Athenon, Athens 1991, p. 20)

Comintern continued for a number of years to support Bulgarian nationalist positions as expressed by such Bulgarian leaders as V. Kolarov or Georgi Dimitrov. The line taken by the Comintern and the Balkan Communist Federation (BCF), provided for the foundation of an 'independent and united Macedonia and Thrace', which would have consisted of the geographic departments of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Greece.

Despite their initial reservations, the Communist Parties of Greece and Yugoslavia in the end began to follow the party line of the Comintern. The Comintern persisted in its pro-Bulgarian line until 1935, when international conditions in face of the rise of Nazism and Fascism in Europe, led to the popular front policy which did not favor the advancing of the nationalist or separatist slogans of alienating the broad masses of the people.

WW II provided Bulgaria with an opportunity to annex the Macedonian territories of Yugoslavia and Greece, as well as Western Thrace. The Filov government signed the Tripartite agreement with Hitler and his allies, and thus, when the Nazis occupied the Balkans, they were given their reward. By virtue of the Hitler-Filov accords, Bulgaria occupied almost the whole of Yugoslavian Macedonia and the eastern part of Greek Macedonia. The Germans kept Central Macedonia under their command. Later, in 1943, the Bulgarians obtained German permission to extend their zone to include more parts of the Greek area while in the western Macedonia security battalions of pro-Bulgarian Slav-speakers, known as 'Ohrana', were created. Bulgarian authorities during all this period implemented a policy of forcible Bulgarisation. However, complete incorporation of the Greek areas into the state of Bulgaria was averted thanks to massive demonstrations in Athens and other cities. Nazis calculated the risks to their own security interests and forbade their Bulgarian allies from proceeding with annexation proceedings. At the same time, for Yugoslavs, WW II signaled the onset of a new era in Macedonian nationalism.[39] In Yugoslavian Macedonia, a large part of the people, unhappy with the Serbian administration, greeted Bulgarians as liberators, but later due to the inconsiderate behavior of Bulgarian authorities, a much cooler climate developed into hostility between them. Tito's partisan movement thus began to spread also in Yugoslav Macedonia.

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[39] D. Perry, Macedonia, Published in: G. Stokes, Nationalism in the Balkans, Garland Publishing, New York 1984, p. 179.

It was at this moment that the Yugoslav communists chose to announce their manifesto for the post-war reorganization of the Yugoslav state as a federal state.[40] One of the six federated republics was to be the "Socialist Republic of Macedonia", whose Slav population would cease to be regarded as Serbian or Bulgarian, and acquire the new name of 'Macedonian'.[41]

Having invented the 'Macedonian' nationality, a twin goal was pursued  This goal was to eliminate the Bulgarian influence on their people, and at the same time to provide a final solution to the Macedonian question by incorporating both Bulgarian Macedonia and Greek Macedonia into a united Macedonian state, which would then be converted into a federated state in the post-war Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.[42]

In the critical years between 1944 and 1946, Slavo-Macedonian émigrés from Greece formed an organization in Skopje named NOF (National Liberation Front) and send armed guerrilla bands back to the border areas of Greek Macedonia. When the Greek Civil War began in 1946, these Slavo-Macedonians entered Greece and joined the Greek Communist movement in large numbers. They were fighting what they saw at this time as a national liberation struggle for the 'Macedonians of the Aegean' in order to win their national rights.

On the Bulgarian side, the state finally acknowledged the inhabitants of Bulgarian Macedonia (Pirin) as 'Macedonians' and paved the way for the incorporation of the province of Pirin into the Socialist Republic of Macedonia.

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[40] In 1943, at Jajce, Josip Broz Tito pledged to create a postwar Yugoslavia comprised of 6 national federated states. With the establishment of Macedonia as a political entity inside federal Yugoslavia, conscious fostering of Macedonian nationalism began.

[41] 'Macedonianism' was an invention of Tito to serve as a cultural buttress against Bulgaria, which coveted the area. The other 5 republics of the Yugoslavian Federal state were: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia.

[42] Greece, although among the victors of WW II, was weak by the civil war. The strongest power on the Balkan scene was Tito's Yugoslavia. Tito's plan in reality had been to extend the Yugoslav federation and to include Bulgaria as a 7th republic. The 3 Macedonia's (Macedonia of the Aegean, Macedonia of the Pirin, and Macedonia of the Vardar) would be united to form one  big 'Republic of Macedonia'. Thus, the old national problems of the Balkans were supposed to find their solution according to the federal model of the Soviet Union. The Bulgarian and the Greek communist parties had accepted Tito's plans. It was the resistance of the Greek nationalist government, supported by the British, and after 1947 by the U.S., as well as the Tito/Stalin dispute that cancelled those plans. (G. Prevelakis, The Return of the Macedonian Question, Published in: F. Carter & H. Norris, The Changing Shape of the Balkans, Westview Press, Colorado 1996, p. 139).

The split between Tito and Stalin, which suddenly occurred in the summer of 1948, upset all the Yugoslavian plans to play a leading role in the Balkans using the Macedonian question as the central lever. The final outcome of those five tragic years (1945-1950) was that the majority of the Slavo-Macedonians, or the so-called Slavophones, left Greece. During the Greek Civil war, Slavophones of Greek Macedonia had been estimated to number around 90,000.[43] A significant majority had joined the Communist-led guerrilla army, and they left Greece in 1949 to find refuge in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria or other communist countries. Yugoslavia, faced with the nightmare prospect of a Soviet invasion, looked for support in the West, which opened up the way for the normalization of relations with Greece and the signing, in 1954, of a tripartite Balkan Pact of defensive alliance, to which Turkey also was a member. The new circumstances led Yugoslavia to drop its territorial demands and to restrict itself to formal claims for the recognition of Macedonian minorities. Lastly, Bulgaria also dropped the slogan of a united Macedonia after the death of Stalin in 1953, and adopted the position that there is no 'Macedonian nation' and that consequently there can be no Macedonian minority in Bulgaria.

After all, in the mid 1950s, it seemed that the traditional 'Macedonian Question' was no longer a problem. The establishment of the Republic of Macedonia was later presented in Yugoslav statements as 'the final settlement of the Macedonian national question'. As a general outcome of this period up until then, the three regions of Macedonia tried to heal their wounds caused by the opportunistic diplomacy of Balkan governments followed by the horrors of a series of fratricidal wars[44] and by the atrocities of the two World Wars. In the future they worked peacefully for the political, economic and social development of the countries to which they belonged.

It is obvious though to a systematic observer of the area that by the beginning of the Cold War, the basic structure of the Macedonian issue had been an equilateral triangle (Greece- Serbia- Bulgaria). At this point Dr. G. Prevelakis quotes:

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[43] E. Kofos, Nationalism and Communism in Macedonia, Institute of Balkan Studies, Salonika 1964, p. 172.

[44] For the description of the atrocities during the Balkan Wars, the reader can refer to the book: "The Other Balkan Wars", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington DC 1993.

The Macedonian problem is like a set of concentric circles. At the center we find Macedonia with its composite population. In the first circle around the core are situated three nations in competition for its control, that is, Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria. In the second circle, we find Turkey, Albania and Romania, three states that have had strong geopolitical interests in Macedonia. Turkey ruled Macedonia until the Balkan Wars. Albania has a common border with Macedonia and an Albanian minority lives in its western part. Even the Romanians raised irredentist claims on Macedonia (as well as on Thrace and Epirus), based on the presence of a population of Latin vernacular, the Vlachs or Aromouns, who practiced transhumance in the mountains of these areas. With sedentarization and urbanization, this population has been absorbed into the other nations. The lack of a common border of Romania with Macedonia has been a serious handicap for Romanian aspirations. At a third layer, we find the major European powers -or the superpowers- with their strategies: Germany-Austria and the 'Drang nach Osten', Italy and the 'Mare Nostrum', the Russian/Soviet search for an outlet to the warm seas, the English and the French interest for the Middle East and the Arab World, and the American policy of containment. Although the actors and the forms of intervention changed, the strategic interest of Macedonia remained. All those layers interact in ways difficult to predict… The local, the regional and the international conflicts are 'interiorized' in the Macedonian question. This imposition of three different levels of geopolitical tension can make Macedonia one of the hottest spots in the world.[45]

Theoretically, the federal Yugoslavian state remained responsible only for the finance, economic planning, foreign policy, defense, communications, and legal matters of its six republics. They were supposed to retain all other governmental functions.[46] Reality proved to be different, however. As in the early years of the state, Belgrade maintained tight control over all aspects of Yugoslav society, although the foundation was different-Communism, not nationalism. By the time Tito broke from the Stalinist Bloc, centralized control relaxed somewhat and the republics assumed greater influence over their internal affairs throughout the 1950s, and over the federal government under the constitution of 1953. Conditions continued to improve when Tito promulgated a new constitution in 1963 that further decentralized the government and established a considerable legislative independence at the republic level.

[45] G. Prevelakis, The return of the Macedonian Question, Published in: F. Carter & H. Norris, The Changing Shape of the Balkans, Westview Press, Colorado 1996, pp. 137-138.

[46] B. Jelavich, History of the Balkans- Vol. II, Cambridge University Press, New York 1983, pp. 296-297.

Despite the considerable gains made in establishing republican autonomy from the central government in Belgrade, the republics, mostly Croatia and Slovenia, continuously demanded and gained greater decentralization. As B. Jelavich points out, discussions took on an increasingly nationalistic tone, as the republics once again aired old grievances against Belgrade's centralization.[47] By 1971, Yugoslavia verged on disintegration and only Tito's prestige held the country together. It seemed though, that as long as he, and the Belgrade governments in general, kept the Yugoslav federation strongly together, the dangers of a new explosion were limited. The Macedonian question was part of a Yugoslav strategy of internal federal politics and the rare outbursts belonged to the tactical arsenal of diplomatic pressures towards Greece and Bulgaria. Tito knew that the Macedonian issue could find little voice in either Bulgarian or Greek Macedonia. The United States Yugoslavia and compelled the Greek governments to overlook the process of Tito's 'Macedonian ethnogenesis' and the utilization of Greek national symbols.[48] The Bulgarians were also required to comply with Soviet discipline because of the Cold War, and did not raise any issues about the Macedonian question.[49]

Tito's death in 1980 set in motion the slow, painful demise of Yugoslavia. In a gradual process, republic leaders increasingly focused on local and republic issues at the state's expense.[50] At that moment, Slobodan Milosevic became a dominant leader in the Serbian political scene. He introduced a simple solution of unrestrained Serbian nationalism that sought to overturn the existing system and restore Serbs and Serbia to their 'right place'. Within two years he seized control of the Serbian Communist Party, eliminated his Serbian rivals, and gained the support of the Yugoslav Army.[51] All these events obviously had considerable consequences for Yugoslavia. Federal sanctions of

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[47] Ibid, p. 293.

[48] Further explanation of this 'Macedonian ethnogenesis' process is given in Chapter III of this thesis.

[49] G. Prevelakis, The Return of the Macedonian Question, Published in: F. Carter & H. Norris, The Changing Shape of the Balkans, Westview Press, Colorado 1996, p. 145.

[50] According to Sabina Petra Ramet, the unraveling of Yugoslavia began in April 1981, when ethnic Albanians in Kosovo rioted to protest their economic straits, and demonstrations took on an anti-Serb character. As rumors spread of supposed Albanian atrocities, Serbian nationalism steadily grew until March 1986, when the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences declared Serbs to be the oppressed minority in Yugoslavia. S. P. Ramet, War in the Balkans, Foreign Affairs, Vol. 71, No. 4, Fall 1992, p. 82.

[51] Milosevic brought down the governments of Kosovo, Vojvodina, and Montenegro, and replaced them with loyal supporters. Then, in February 1989, he eliminated the constitutional provisions that had guaranteed autonomy for Kosovo and Vojvodina and reincorporated them into Serbia (Br. Magas, The War in Yugoslavia, Royal United Services Institute Journal, Winter 1991, p. 34).

Milosevic's actions legitimized Serbian nationalism as well as the use of violence to attain a goal.

## B.    RECENT HISTORY-CREATION OF FYROM

First indications of a nationalist and irredentist Macedonian movement appeared outside the Balkans in the early 1980s. Non-Greek Macedonian nationalists living in Australia and Canada as immigrants accused Greece, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia of oppressing the 'Macedonian Nation' and occupying Macedonian lands. Counter-manifestos organized by Greek-Macedonians in the same countries of the diaspora responded by underlining the Greek origins of Macedonia and Macedonian history. As E. Kofos states, if these confrontations had remained at a safe distance from Macedonia, they could only be viewed as interesting cases of cultural geography.[52]

However, at the end of communist rule in Yugoslavia, the situation in 'Macedonia' began to sound more alarming. A French journalist published an article in 1990 entitled 'The Awakening of the Komitadjis', in which he reports the re-establishment of IMRO as VMRO-DPMNE (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization -Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity).[53] In October 1989, the slogans 'Solun (Thessaloniki) is ours', 'we fight for a united Macedonia', and 'Prohor Pcinjski (a Serb monastery) is Macedonian' began to be chanted by fans of Vardar, the biggest football team of Skopje. Those, as well many other slogans, had appeared on walls of buildings in Skopje without oppression by the Macedonian authorities.[54] In September 1990, the Assembly of the small Yugoslav republic adopted an amendment in the constitution that stated:

> The SR of Macedonia takes care of the status and rights of parts of the Macedonian nation living in neighboring countries, takes care of Macedonians living in other countries, Macedonian emigrants and guest

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[52] For the story of the various 'brands' of Macedonian identity, among which we find the new brands of 'Macedono-Canadian' and 'Macedono-Australian'. E. Kofos, National Heritage and National Identity in 19th and 20th Century Macedonia, Published in: M. Blinkhorn & Th. Veremis (eds), Modern Greece: Nationalism and Nationality, ELIAMEP, Athens 1990, pp. 132-5.

[53] J. Nothias, Le revei des Comitadjis, L'autre Journal, Paris, October 1990, p. 152/155, and, H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 173. This movement has the slogan 'spiritual and territorial unification of Macedonia' inscribed on its flag. The party openly demands that a new delineation of Macedonian borders with Bulgaria, Albania, and Greece should be carried out.

[54] H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 172.

workers from Macedonia; it encourages and aids forging and developing ties with all them.[55]

Finally, on the 20th of February 1990, a large Macedonian demonstration[56] took place in Skopje asserting their 'Macedonian identity' and protesting against the oppression of brother 'Macedonians' in Bulgaria, Greece, and Albania.[57]

It was indisputable that Yugoslav Macedonia was entering a new phase during the 1980s. This was a phase that was largely influenced by two major elements. The first, as stated previously, was Tito's death which awaken nationalistic attitudes and ethnic conflicts inside federal Yugoslavia. The second was the de-stabilization of the Balkans because of the end of the Cold War. This new phase of the Macedonian Question once more started to cause friction among the Balkan states.

Not very far from Macedonia, due to the violent Kosovar reaction to the loss of their freedom, the Federal Yugoslav Army occupied Kosovo in 1990 and established the precedent of using army forces against a fellow Federal republic. These events produced anxiety inside Yugoslavia, as all the other republics feared Milosevic's centralizing tendencies.[58] By the end of 1990, the disintegration of Yugoslavia accelerated. With the exception of Kosovo, republics held elections, which resulted in non-communist governments in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Slovenia, and a communist-controlled minority coalition in Macedonia. When Milosevic showed no signs of compromising with his strong nationalist attitude, Croatia and Slovenia declared that they would leave the Federation by June 26, 1991. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia effectively ceased to exist on June 27, 1991, when Yugoslav Army tanks invaded the new independent state of Slovenia. It seemed that violence was influencing the course of historical events once more in the Balkan Peninsula.[59]

On 8 September 1991, a referendum on the independence of Macedonia was held and obtained endorsement by the overwhelming majority of the republic's voters. More

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[55] Ibid, p. 172.

[56] Estimates of the number of people participating varied from 30,000 to 120,000.

[57] H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 173.

[58] S. P. Ramet, War in the Balkans, Foreign Affairs, Vol. 71-No 4, fall 1992, p. 85.

[59] As M. Bookman states: "It seems that in the Balkans periods of inter-ethnic peace are the exception, rather than the rule". (M. Bookman, Economic Decline and Nationalism in the Balkans, p. 34).

than 65 percent participated.[60] Ethnic Albanians of Macedonia boycotted this referendum, as they were not satisfied with government's actions concerning several demands of the minority such as the reopening of Albanian secondary schools that had recently been closed.

Elections that took place in the same year confirmed the return of IMRO (as VMRO-DPMNE) on the political scene. It won 31 per cent of the seats or 37 seats out of 120, and became the strongest party in the parliament, with the SKM-PDP (the communist Party for Democratic Transformation) second with 31 seats, and the mainly Albanian PDP (Party for Democratic Prosperity) third with 25 seats.

In the last days of united Yugoslavia, Kiro Gligorov, an old communist elite politician, former Deputy President of the Yugoslav government and Federal Minister of Finance, was leading Macedonia.[61] He was justifiably cautious with any independence movement, as he deeply believed that a breakup of the Yugoslav federal state would be fatal to Macedonian consciousness, which was still a relatively new phenomenon. The tragic events in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Kosovo, and the most recent ethnic conflict in FYROM in 2001 have shown that such concerns were well founded. On the other hand, VMRO-DPMNE was not affected by those doubts. At the time Gligorov and his supporters insisted on a Macedonian independent state within a 'commonwealth of sovereign Yugoslav states' with a common army, currency, and foreign policy[62], VMRO-DPMNE called for a complete separation from the old Yugoslav regime, and for a new independent Macedonian army.[63] Despite these controversies and the extreme tensions that had begun to appear among the rest of the Yugoslav republics and Milosevic's government, there is no doubt that Gligorov's moderate political actions and diplomacy

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[60] The referendum endorsed an independent and sovereign Macedonia, with the right to join the future alliance of sovereign states of Yugoslavia. H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 177.

[61] Gligorov was elected President of the Republic of Macedonia in late January 1991. An important thing is that he won even the votes of VMRO in the elections.

[62] Gligorov knew that Macedonia –for security, political, and economic reasons- should be oriented towards a loose commonwealth with the other Yugoslav republics. About 50-60% of Macedonia's trade was carried out with this region. He played though on the card of an alliance of sovereign Yugoslav successor states. As a survey of April 1991 showed, some 60 percent of the Macedonian population opted for this commonwealth.

[63] H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 176.

turned out to be very important for the peaceful withdrawal of the JNA (Yugoslav National Army) from Macedonia, and the country's smooth transition to independence.[64]

Macedonia formally declared its independence on the 20th of November 1992. Since then, the Macedonian question has become a European as well as an international issue. In September 1991, the European Union (EU) set up the Badinter Commission. The Commission, named after its president, the former French Minister of Justice, established the criteria for international recognition of the former Yugoslav republics. The main points of this Commission were the respect for human rights and rights of minorities, and a consensus on its independence that had to be confirmed at a referendum. Under pressure from Greece, the EU demanded on December 16 1991, as a precondition for its recognition, that Macedonia give constitutional guaranties with no territorial claims on any neighboring state. In addition, any kind of 'hostile propaganda' had to cease, including the use of a denomination that might imply territorial claims. This text did not mention the name 'Macedonia' but it implied the demand for renouncing that term. In fact, Greece used its entire diplomatic means available and mobilized the Diaspora, about 5 million people around the world, in order to stop any recognition of the new state under the name of Macedonia.[65] The preservation of the name 'Macedonia' was designated by Greece as 'preservation of post communist neo-nationalism'. On April 8 1993, the United Nations (UN) recognized the new state with a provisional name of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and without a flag, due to Greece's reaction to the use of the symbol of ancient Macedonian kings or the Star of Vergina, sign of Phillip II, on the flag.[66] The compromise name came from an initiative by France, Spain, and Britain to end the deadlock between Athens and Skopje. Attempts to find a long-term solution so far have failed.[67] Officially, the name remains an issue without a solution

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[64] Macedonia had the only such non-violent transition among the other Yugoslav republics. On the 26th of March 1992 the JNA formally left the territory of Macedonia, after signing a document transferring facilities and equipment. J. Pettifer, The new Macedonian Question, Macmillan Press Ltd., London 1999, p. xxii.

[65] G. Prevelakis, The return of the Macedonian Question, Published in: F. Carter & H. Norris, The Changing Shape of the Balkans, Westview Press, Colorado 1996, p. 146.

[66] Ibid, p. 146, and H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 177.

[67] In May 1993, international negotiators Cyrus Vance and David Owen suggested two new names for FYROM – 'Nova Macedonia' or 'Upper Macedonia'- but they were both rejected by Greece due to the use of the name 'Macedonia'. The most acceptable name to Athens seemed to be 'Slavomacedonia', but this was strongly objected to by the Albanian minority of FYROM, the government of Albania (President S. Berisha), and the Kosovar leader Ibrahim Rugova. H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 178.

even at the writing of this thesis, but 'Macedonia' has become the internationally accepted name for FYROM.[68]

When explaining the Greek position concerning the opposed threat, Greek officials often relied on statements written by the nationalist Macedonian party VMRO-DPMNE. There is no doubt that radical members of this party dreams about a Greater Macedonia with Thessaloniki (Salonica) as its capital. Party members have put into circulation geographical maps showing northern Greece as a part of this 'Greater' state together with Bulgarian 'Macedonia of the Pirin'. This, as well as other nationalist actions such as the use of the name of Thessaloniki (Solun in Slavic) as a brand name on food or liqueurs, or the use of the sun of Vergina instead of the Yugoslavian star on their flag, led to a continuous worsening of relations between the two states. One of the real Greek fears, however, is the fear its fierce enemy, Turkey. There are some suspicions that the latter pulls the strings in FYROM. Thus, Greek politicians and other political analysts speak about a possible 'Muslim surrounding' of Greece. They are referring to the partly Muslim population of FYROM, as well as the agreement on economic and military cooperation signed between Turkey and Albania, which is also a predominantly Moslem country.

An inevitable result of the continually worsening relations with FYROM was the embargo imposed by the Greek socialist government of Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou since the 16th of February 1994. It was imposed on all Macedonian imports and exports through the city of Thessaloniki, and really worsened the already doddering economy of the small state.[69]

On October 16 1994, the presidential, and the first ballot of parliamentary elections, were held in FYROM. Out of a total of 1,360,729 registered voters, 77.7 percent went to the polls. Kiro Gligorov won as President with 52.4 percent of registered voters, i.e., 67.4 percent of those who cast their votes. Later that year on November 13, FYROM announced the results of the population census which had started on June 21. There were 1,925,000 inhabitants, of which 66.9 percent identified themselves as

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[68] Current Prime Minister of Greece K. Simitis and his government appear ready and willing to re-negotiate and find a final solution to the problems between the two states.

[69] G. Prevelakis, The Return of the Macedonian Question, Published in: F. Carter & H. Norris, The Changing Shape of the Balkans, Westview Press, Colorado 1996, p. 146.

Macedonians, 22.5 percent as Albanians, 3.84 percent as Turks, 2.28 percent as Gypsies, and 2.04 percent as Serbs.

It is important here to refer to the UN's Security Council resolution No. 795 of December 11 1992, which after 'considering the request by the Government in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia' approved the deployment to Macedonia of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), consisting of 700 soldiers, 35 military monitors, and 26 members of the civil police. Later, on June 11 1993, FYROM accepted the UN proposal to deploy a contingent of 300 U.S. soldiers within the protection force in FYROM, which was the beginning of the UNPREDEP. Afterwards, FYROM decided to strictly apply UN Security Council's resolutions to the blockade imposed against FR Yugoslavia[70], which resulted in the stricter control of trucks on the border with FR Yugoslavia (September 4 1993).[71]

On December 23 1993, FYROM's parliament decided to apply for the NATO 'Partnership for Peace' (PfP) program. The Permanent Political Committee of NATO in Brussels unanimously decided on the accession of FYROM to the PfP on November 11 1995, and 4 days later the Macedonian Prime Minister signed the PfP program protocol. FYROM was the second country in the territory of the former Yugoslavia to join this program (the first was Slovenia).

On the 16th of February in 1995, FYROM's government criticized the unsuccessful attempt to open an Albanian university in Tetovo in western FYROM. It was described as a violation of the Constitution and Macedonian laws. The next day severe clashes between Albanians and the police occurred near Tetovo. One student died and 18 were injured. Demonstrators protested against the decision of the government to prevent the opening of the Albanian university in Tetovo.

As previously mentioned, the embargo policy, which the Greek socialist government of A. Papandreou had imposed on FYROM since February 1994, had worsened the economic, social, and political situation inside the small state, and had brought the danger of a crisis a step closer. This decision, in the author's opinion, was

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[70] Due to the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[71] Later, on March 31 1995, the UN decided that former UNPROFOR would be divided into UNCRO (in Croatia), UNPROFOR (in Bosnia-Herzegovina), and UNPREDEP in FYROM (UN resolution 983).

more a result of intense pressure from the media and public opinion on a weak Greek government than a conscious political/diplomatic action. Greece, politically and intellectually unprepared for a very complex geopolitical situation, had made the wrong decisions concerning the very complicated situation in the Balkans. It was more than obvious at this time that both countries had a common and vital interest in the preservation of peace and good neighborliness in the area.

Finally, after many negotiations and international mediation efforts, the foreign ministers of Greece and FYROM signed an agreement to normalize relations between the two states on September 13, 1995 at the UN Headquarters in New York. They undertook to respect the mutual sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of both regions, and to accept the internationally recognized common borders. FYROM would remove the ancient star of Vergina from its state symbols, and Greece would lift the economic blockade within 30 days. It was also agreed that negotiations concerning the name of 'Macedonia' would subsequently take place. Soon afterwards, on the 27th of September, FYROM was admitted to the Council of Europe under its provisional name.[72] A few days later on the 12th of October, the new state was also admitted to the OSCE. The Greek government finally issued a statement on the 14th of October stating that all restrictions on the movement of goods to and from FYROM would be lifted at midnight of that day.

At the end of the millennium, it appeared that the situation in neighboring Kosovo would greatly impact FYROM by involving its big Albanian minority in the problem. Kosovo, with a population of two million people, of which more than 90 percent were ethnic Albanians, enjoyed an autonomous province status issued under the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution. In 1974, Tito made Kosovo, along with Vojvodina in the north, an autonomous region within Serbia. After Tito's death, as the old Yugoslav Federation was disintegrating, Milosevic, as previously stated, used Serbian nationalism and

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[72] Very soon after these events, on the 3rd of October, one day after returning from talks in Belgrade with Slobodan Milosevic, an unsuccessful assassination attempt by terrorists was made on President Kiro Gligorov. It was largely believed that this was an action taken by members of the tough right-wing nationalist core of the country, but on October 26, 1995 FYROM's police announced that the attempt was committed by a powerful financial and economic multinational organization whose head-office was in a neighboring state. Published by the 'Politika', the Belgrade local TV station on the evening news on October 26, 1995 according to Zlatko Isanovic, a contributing fellow member of the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI).

resentment of the Kosovars[73] as a springboard to national power. In 1989, he abrogated Kosovo's constitutional autonomy, concurrently launching a purge of ethnic Albanians from the province's civil service and curtailing government funding for public institutions, including schools.

In response, the Kosovars, led by Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, a Sorbonne-educated intellectual, set up a shadow government and began a campaign of non-violent resistance to Serbian oppression. The political leadership of the ethnic Albanian majority in Kosovo had sought greater independence and freedom from Serb authorities since the early 1990s, but Serbia had flatly rejected the idea. During the war in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995, Serb police had made numerous, but unsuccessful, attempts to break apart the parallel Kosovar state. Ongoing tensions between ethnic Serbs and ethnic Albanians worsened in the spring of 1998, with a series of armed clashes throughout the region. Between February and June 1998 it is estimated that more than 200 ethnic Albanians were killed in Kosovo at the hands of Serbian special police and military forces. Both the police and the Kosovo Liberation Army[74] were active in the region and each operated numerous checkpoints throughout Kosovo.

Albania is what makes the region around Kosovo and FYROM volatile. It has always been the poorest country in Europe despite its access to the sea. After the collapse of communism, Albanian democratic regimes had tried and failed to prevent the country from fragmenting into clan-dominated enclaves. In early 1997, after the collapse of a nation-wide pyramid investment plan, Albania disintegrated altogether. The army disrupted the country and people looted governmental arsenals.[75] These arms and ammunition were rapidly given to Kosovar guerilla fighters (the KLA), who started to gather and train inside Albania.

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[73] As T. Judah states "technically the word Kosovar should refer to any inhabitant of Kosovo, whatever their ethnic background. However, in recent years, the term has come to be used as shorthand for Kosovo Albanians only… It is useful as a name because, unlike 'Albanians', it distinguishes between Kosovo Albanians and Albanians from Albania itself". (T. Judah, Kosovo: War and Revenge, Yale University Press, New Haven 2000, p. xi.) The author of this thesis accepts the above clarification, and uses the term 'Kosovar' as the one referring to the Albanians of Kosovo.

[74] Also known by the initials KLA or UCK. It is a Kosovar guerrilla force with considerable connections to the official Albanian regime.

[75] There was an estimated 700,000 rifles and 3 million grenades and bombs.

The Albanian minority in FYROM, supporting their 'Albanian brothers' in Kosovo, was demonstrating from the early 1998s in Skopje for the recognition of an independent Kosovo, in conjunction with guarantees of territorial and cultural autonomy for the Albanians in FYROM. In fact, KLA's ideas and plans were going behind the borders of their territory. During an interview in the Conway Hall, at Red Lion Square in London on July 5 1998, while the KLA uprising in Kosovo was in full swing, Jashar Salibu, a Kosovar official, clearly declared:

> Kosova starts in Tivar (in Montenegro) and ends in Manastir (the city of Bitola in FYROM). We do not care what America and England think about it, we should unite with actions, not with words. We do not care what Clinton and other devils think! We are going to tell the truth".[76]

In fact, many Kosovars did not simply want to 'unite' but to join with the Albanian state as was concluded from a 1995 survey.[77] They were dreaming of carving out a greater Albania state, combining Kosovo and Albania with the Albanian areas of other surrounding countries such as FYROM and Montenegro.

At that time, the United States and its European allies had been much aware of the special gravity of the situation in Kosovo, as it was characterized as the 'powder keg' of the Balkans. They were also very concerned about Macedonia, which had a population that was a volatile Slavic-Albanian mix. Anything that aroused Albanian nationalism was extremely dangerous for the stability and peace of the whole area.[78]

When violence exploded in Kosovo in March 1998, the United States, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia[79] who were determined to avoid an escalation of the conflict, reacted rapidly by demanding that Milosevic cease all action by Serb security forces against the civilian population, withdraw from Kosovo, and start an unconditional dialogue with the Kosovars for a political solution that would provide them

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[76] T. Judah, Kosovo: War and Revenge, Yale University Press, New Haven 2000, p. 103.

[77] According to this survey, 43 percent of Kosovars favored unification with Albania, while the other 57 percent desired outright independence (I. Daalder & M. O'Hanlon, Winning Ugly, Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC 2000, p. 8).

[78] Violence in Kosovo had to be avoided, according to western countries, even if that required direct military action by the United States and its allies. In a letter to Milosevic, President G. Bush warned that "in the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serbian action, the United States will be prepared to employ force against the Serbs in Kosovo and in Serbia proper" (I. Daalder & M. O'Hanlon, Winning Ugly, Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC 2000, p. 9).

[79] The six Contact Group, which had dealt with the Bosnian conflict earlier in the decade.

with increased autonomy though short of the independence that virtually all Kosovars were seeking. One of the assumptions guiding this swift international reaction to Serbian violence in Kosovo was to exclude the possibility of independence as a solution. Basically there were two reasons for this. The first was that independence for Kosovars would set a precedent for the Bosnian Serbs and Croats seeking the same, or integration with neighboring states. The second was that independence in Kosovo would destabilize the surrounding areas. Macedonian Albanians, first of all, would use this as a reason for joining their fellow brothers in Albania and Kosovo to strive for a Greater Albania. This Macedonian destabilization could ignite older nationalist and territorial ambitions in Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia as well[80]; a possibility that was considered to be destabilizing for NATO's entire southern region.

On the other side of Kosovo's dilemma lay the lofty principles of respect for state sovereignty and human rights and these ideals are considered fundamental to the civilizations of western countries. However, Kosovo by the summer of 1998 was no longer a human rights issue. There was a full-scale civil war in the province that was threatening to spread to other states in the region. As M. Ignatieff states, it was more than possible that KLA tactics were a deliberate strategy designed to incite the Serbs to commit massacres that would force NATO to intervene.[81]

Unfortunately for them, they miscalculated western intentions both politically and diplomatically. With the ambitious dream of a possible formation of a 'Greater Albania', they demanded Kosovo's full independence, and tried to convince American and European policy makers of this by presenting this area as ungovernable. However, neither the United States nor Europe would allow changes to the existing borders in a region such as the Balkans. American resolve had stiffened considerably since the Bosnia debacle. There was a new Secretary of the State, Madeleine Albright, the daughter of a Czech diplomat forced into exile after Munich, who was especially sensitive to the appearance of appeasement. Milosevic, on the other hand, totally ignored evidence that the Administration's inclination to bomb had increased rapidly from the days of Bosnia.

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[80] I. Daalder & M. O'Hanlon, Winning Ugly, Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC 2000, p. 25.
[81] M. Ignatieff, Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond, Metropolitan books, New York 2000, p. 58.

All western efforts to stop violence in Kosovo and forge agreement based on a political solution failed which resulted in NATO's decision in March 1999 to intervene militarily in order to achieve by force what it could not achieve through negotiations. NATO and US President Bill Clinton himself made the decision to go to war in the belief that a few days of limited high-technology air bombing of Serbian targets over the Balkans would likely suffice to persuade Milosevic to end the attacks on the Kosovar population, accept a political formula for restoring Kosovo's autonomy, and thus bring a speedy, risk-free victory. This proved to be a major miscalculation, as Milosevic escalated his violent campaign against the local population rather than bowing to NATO's demands, by removing 1.3 million people from their homelands and pushing 800,000 people out of Kosovo.[82] Apart from the fact that Milosevic seemed to be happy to get rid of these Albanians, he also hoped to export the war to the rest of the area. FYROM's authorities, highly alarmed and concerned by this human wave arriving in a small country of 2 million people, tried several plans to block them from crossing the border. This resulted in an absolute refusal to let them enter the country on April 3. They feared, as Milosevic had hoped, that the influx of these Albanians who also thought they would never go back home, would upset FYROM's fragile ethnic balance and thus drag the country into war between its Slav and Albanian population. FYROM also feared that there might be a considerable number of KLA fighters amongst the young refugees coming from Kosovo who could again possibly start a new war inside the country.

Although UNHCR and western countries were by no means prepared to deal with the influx of refugees, they reacted extremely quickly. The key to the solution was the 8,000 NATO troops force stationed in FYROM under British General Jackson's command[83], who was ordered to build camps for Kosovar refugees. It was a solution that worked perfectly. Kosovar refugees were marshaled into the huge Stenkovec camps built inside FYROM and very close to the borders with Kosovo, while other camps were very rapidly deployed inside Albania near Kukes. Without any doubt, UNHCR forces, and

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[82] By the end of the bombing on June 10, 1999 according to UNHCR, 848,100 Kosovars had left the province. Of these, 444,600 went to Albania, 244,500 to FYROM, 69,900 to Montenegro, and 91,057 were airlifted from FYROM's airports to other countries. For more analysis see UNHCR, Refugees, Vol. 3, No. 116, 1999, p .11). Another large, unknown number was hiding in the hills and mountains of the area.

[83] Although Milosevic had rejected the Rambouillet (negotiations in the French city were held from February 6-23, between Serbs, Kosovars and the Contact Group) peace package, the troops were being assembled in FYROM for the post-peace deal peacekeeping force.

forces from other countries, responded rapidly and properly to this refugee crisis.[84] FYROM's authorities, trying to return balance to the country after the first shock, imposed a ban on Kosovars leaving their camps as they did not want refugees to move in with friends or possible relatives in Skopje or in the highly Albanian-inhabited northwestern part of the country. Thus, only lower class Kosovars who had no friends or relatives ended up in the camps, while others who were professionals and middle-class with connections to the local inhabitants, went straight to Tetovo or to other cities. As Tim Judah states "the whole of Pristina's café society appeared to have been transported, en bloc, to the cafés of Tetovo".[85]

By the end of the second month of NATO's bombing, President Clinton had already ruled out a forced entry with US troops into Kosovo on the grounds that the casualties would be too high, and it was totally dependent on precision lethality from high altitudes. The question everybody asked was who would break first: Slobodan Milosevic or western public opinion disgusted by air strikes on innocent victims which was obviously disconnected from any sense of strategy.

Finally, it was Milosevic who, after seventy-eight days of bombing, relented and accepted NATO's terms for a cessation of a war that was not a war at all, but an exercise in coercive diplomacy designed to change one man's mind. Clausewitz would have called Kosovo a war that was fought and won by technicians. Unlike a total war, Kosovo did not mobilize many thousands of men. It mobilized the public opinion around the world, and only 1,500 NATO airmen. It was fought in conference rooms, and did not end with parades or ceremonies in cemeteries. This war did not reach into the psyche of people, and that is why M. Ignatieff called it 'a virtual war'.[86]

NATO won this campaign not only in the battlefield, but also in terms of its broader policy and the achievement of its major aims for Kosovo. There were probably several reasons for Milosevic's decision to capitulate, including the threat of a ground war, and Russia's diplomatic role. The NATO air campaign was the most fundamental factor though. Had NATO not remained unified until the end, had Russia not joined

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[84] Camps were well organized, with tents, medical facilities, doctors, food, water, and even satellite phones.

[85] T. Judah, Kosovo: War and Revenge, Yale University Press, New Haven 2000, p. 253.

[86] M. Ignatieff, Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond, Metropolitan books, New York 2000, p. 111.

forces with the West in the diplomatic endgame, and had the alliance not begun to develop a credible threat of a ground invasion, Milosevic might have a way to escape. The option of a de facto international protectorate in Kosovo, which was decided and accepted from the Clinton administration and its European allies from early 1999, was finally imposed. On June 3, Milosevic and the Serbian parliament approved NATO's peace plan dictated by Viktor Chernomyrdin and Martti Ahtisaari[87]. Seven days later, Javier Solana -NATO's Secretary General, acting as NAC's messenger- instructed SACEUR (US General W. Clark) to suspend air operations, and the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1244, welcoming an end to the war, calling on all Yugoslavian forces to leave Kosovo, and authorizing the immediate deployment of international security and a civilian presence in Kosovo for an indefinite period of time. On August 4, the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees estimated that more than 765,000 refugees had returned to Kosovo.

As can obviously be concluded from what has already been discussed, almost all of the political decisions and actions of Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic were a failure. However, one of the most serious was that his policies resulted in the KLA growing into a serious guerrilla force when it initially was only a couple of dozen men, a few groups of armed farmers and ideologues.[88] The Domino theory was going to be seen soon after the end of the war in Kosovo when the country having the most fragile interethnic consensus in the southern Balkans would be drawn in. At the beginning of 2001, a new 'Albanian Liberation' group emerged in the northern part of FYROM. The rebels called themselves the National Liberation Army (NLA), and were demanding a new Macedonian Constitution, better rights for the Albanians in FYROM, and international mediation of the dispute. They simply declared themselves mostly Macedonian born Albanians, but their number included many of the 'veteran' rebels who fought in the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) one year before. In addition, the rebel group[89] has used Kosovo as a supply base and safe area[90], and insisted that their intention was not to fragment FYROM.

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[87] He was the Finnish Prime Minister. Finland had the Presidency of the EU at that time.

[88] T. Judah, Kosovo: War and Revenge, Yale University Press, New Haven 2000, p. 309.

[89] FYROM's authorities describe them as a group of terrorists and criminals (P. Bishop, Rebels Threaten New Balkan Bloodbath, London Daily Telegraph, March 12, 2001).

[90] BBC News, Q & A: Macedonia- What Next?, Thursday 6 September 2001, 16:20 GMT, available online at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/in_depth/europe/2001/macedonia_crisis/.

Between them their heaviest weapons are mortars and machine guns. However, they have the capacity to propel the region into another round of bloody conflicts, despite the presence of 40,000 NATO forces, the massed ranks of the UN and the vast majority of the population's yearning for peace of.

NLA is not the only extremist Albanian group operating in FYROM. There is an older one, the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPMB), established in Kosovo, which started operating on the Serbia-Kosovo border. Its goals are more wide-ranging and include the annexation by Kosovo of the ethnic Albanian inhabited areas of southern Serbia and possibly northern and western FYROM. The UCPMB has become relatively well organized since the spring of 2000. It has the advantage of operating in a small, compact area, and, most importantly, of having been able until recently to move around for all intents and purposes with a sense of impunity.

Though a more recent creation, the NLA has by now[91], established itself as a larger fighting force, with several hundred guerrillas in its ranks. Its more moderate political aims have secured greater support within Kosovo, where many levelheaded ethnic Albanians worry that a new Albanian guerrilla group could turn international opinion against Albanians and the idea of an independent Kosovo. Beyond that, it is very difficult to estimate the real extent to which NLA or UCPMB has achieved public support among local ethnic Albanians within FYROM. Both groups receive strong backing and a substantial part of their supplies from across the porous border with Kosovo and the now-disbanded KLA, on which they have modeled themselves, and whose Albanian-language initials (UCK) are shared by the armed Albanian group in FYROM. Many of these armed men started their 'guerrilla lives' in KLA. Indeed, in mid-May 2001, Gezim Ostreni, a former senior KLA commander, emerged as the NLA's chief of staff.

It is inconceivable that the identity of the rebels is unknown to the Albanian community in FYROM. Publicly though, for reasons of ethnic solidarity, little is being said. Privately, a number of names are mentioned. Most of them are former Kosovo Liberation Army figures from FYROM who were active politically, financially, and militarily in the campaign against the Serbs. The rebel groups operating in FYROM are

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[91] For obvious reasons the present thesis extended its research until September 2001.

believed to be linked to the Albanian fighters who have been killing Serbs inside the buffer zone that runs along southern Serbia's border with Kosovo. Albanian political leaders have said that the rebels may be motivated by bitterness after failing to find a position in post-war Kosovo after the dissolution of the KLA and its subsequent defeat at the polls.[92] Angry and frustrated, they have taken up arms again as a kind of "real KLA".

Fighting in FYROM between the rebels and state forces started in February 2001 with several sporadic incidents in and around the ethnic Albanian village of Tanusevci, on the northern stretch of the Macedonian border with Kosovo. Such incidents had happened before, often caused by FYROM police's attempts to crack down on ethnic Albanian smugglers. An attempt by the Macedonian security forces on February 26 to take control of Tanusevci escalated into a lengthy exchange of fire. The fighting spread first to the mountainous outskirts of Tetovo, the main ethnic Albanian town in FYROM, and later, in May, to the region around Kumanovo in the north. Clashes and unrest also happened in and around FYROM's capital of Skopje.

Even by Balkan standards, the rebel aims are hard to define at this time. FYROM's government and NATO, however earlier this summer, believed that the NLA's strategy was an attempt to repeat the pattern of Kosovo of carrying out attacks designed to provoke a heavy-handed response from Serbian or FYROM's forces. The resultant 'atrocities' could then be exploited with the goal of forcing NATO to extend its protectorate to include the Albanian populations along the Serbian and FYROM borders. As the NLA knows well, continuing violence would have a serious effect on the delicate social and political relationship between FYROM's Slavo-Macedonians and the 30 percent ethnic Albanian population and thus ruin years of building trust between them. DPA[93], which shares power in a coalition government,[94] has declared its opposition to the leading Albanian political party in FYROM. The three-year-old partnership is working well and Albanians wield more power than ever before in the post-communist period.

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[92] P. Bishop, Rebels Threaten New Balkan Bloodbath, London Daily Telegraph, March 12, 2001.

[93] It is the Democratic Party for Albanians.

[94] The government coalition parties VMRO-DPMNE, DA (Democratic Alternative), and DPA form the current cabinet. The President of State has been Boris Trajkovski since 15 December 1999, and the Prime Minister has been Ljubco Georgievski since 30 November 1998. CIA World Factbook, available at: www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mk.html.

DPA's cooperative stance has been condemned as a capitulation by its Albanian opponents, and party officials see the NLA violence as being indirectly aimed at them.

Despite the vicious nature of Albanian politics in FYROM, it seemed obvious by the first half of 2001 that there was no support for the NLA's violence and very little sympathy for its apparent aim of extending Kosovo's borders. On the other hand, it is indisputable that the escalation of fighting in FYROM, if accompanied by a brutal crackdown by security forces of the kind that led to the anti-Serb uprising in Kosovo three years earlier, could radicalize FYROM's large Albanian minority. A subsequent escalation in the fighting could lead to serious inter-ethnic conflict. That, in turn, could trigger large-scale movements of refugees into Albania, Kosovo, and perhaps other neighboring countries. There have also been fears that a war inside FYROM could spill over to its neighbors, and thus spark a regional conflict. This would be a worst-case scenario that the international community, especially NATO and the EU, is desperate to avoid.

When President Clinton encouraged NATO's bombing against Serb forces in Kosovo in 1999, he vowed that military action would 'prevent' a wider war. However, as ethnic Albanian rebels face off against government troops in northern FYROM, there is a growing realization that unfinished business from the Kosovo conflict is fueling this new conflict. As Ivo Daalder[95] was saying to Scott Peterson, a writer from the Christian Science Monitor on March 23,2001:

> This can get more serious than any other Yugoslav war we have seen in
> the last 10 years. If we have not learned one lesson after 10 years, of the
> need for intervening early, then we have not learned anything.

The déjà vu starts with the symbols of the rebels in FYROM. A red-and-black shoulder patch, with the two-headed eagle, and the Albanian-language acronym for their troops (UCK), is the same used by their Kosovo brothers (KLA) two years previously. Mark Thompson, head of the Balkans program at the Brussels-based International Crisis Group, was saying in March 2001:

> There is an epic misunderstanding on the part of the guerrillas. They saw
> the 1999 NATO operation as pro-Albanian, and interpreted it through the

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[95] Author of "Winning Ugly", and a fellow at the Brookings Institute in Washington DC.

nationalist lens as proof that NATO signed on to the Albanian agenda. But times have changed. Washington has declared that it will not commit more troops to the Balkans, and the UN Security Council and EU officials condemn the rebels as 'terrorists'.[96]

The Albanian Government has condemned the use of force by the Macedonian Albanians and says it has no claim on any part of Macedonian territory. It is, in any case, too weak to be thinking of territorial expansion and is in no position to incur the resulting international disapproval. For the Albanians of Macedonia to join fellow Albanians within some new form of confederation might be a possibility, but it is still likely to be a poor second to taking what they consider is their rightful place within Macedonia.

As fighting in FYROM continued from February until August 2001 between Albanian rebels and Macedonian security forces and troops, the international community continued to call for an end to the human rights abuses experienced by civilians during those months. Since February, both government forces and the rebels have been responsible for indiscriminate killings of unarmed civilians. FYROM has also seen incidents of 'disappearances' and abductions, torture and ill treatment, arbitrary arrests and the massive displacement of both the ethnic Albanian and Slavo-Macedonian populations, within and outside of the country.[97] FYROM's authorities have recently declared they will investigate and prosecute war crimes allegedly perpetrated by members of the NLA. Amnesty International reminded the authorities of their obligations under domestic law, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and other international standards relating to arrests, detections and fair trials. The organization also called on the authorities to promptly and impartially investigate allegations of human rights violations perpetrated by FYROM's military and police forces, and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

As events unfolded in FYROM, NATO's initial response was to act strictly within KFOR's mandate, meaning that inside Kosovo only, for example, the blowing up roads leading to the border to make it less accessible to would-be infiltrators and the detention of some of them. It took the alliance the best part of a year to realize the problem of the

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[96] S. Peterson, Unfinished Business in Balkans, The Christian Science Monitor, March 23, 2001.

[97] Amnesty International News Release, A Durable Peace Depends on Respect for Human Rights, August 15, 2001, available in: www.amnesty-usa.org/news/2001/macedonia.

ethnic Albanian insurgency and begin to rethink the role of the KFOR peacekeepers under its command across the border in Kosovo. In fact, NATO all this time was trying to prevent guerrilla incursions from Kosovo, but did not want to intervene militarily inside FYROM. The EU, on the other hand, is playing an unusually active political role in trying to resolve the crisis in FYROM. The Union's two senior foreign policy officials, Javier Solana (the High Commissioner of the Common Security and Defense Policy, and Secretary General of the European Council) and Chris Patten (the Commissioner for External Affairs of the European Commission), have been involved in all party talks in Skopje designed to meet the grievances of the Albanian minority.

The United States is taking a back seat for the moment, in contrast to the high-profile diplomacy of R. Holbrooke during the Kosovo crisis. This is partly because of President G. W. Bush's desire that Europe should take on more of the burden in the Balkans which he considers to be their own backyard, and partly because this administration is still developing its policy towards these various hot spots. It seems now that the recent terrorist events of the 11th of September in New York have resulted in the Macedonian issue being less important to the President's National Security Council. Nevertheless, both the EU and the United States condemn the violence of the Albanian rebels, and support the territorial integrity of FYROM. They also call for further reforms in the building a multiethnic society and extending minority rights in order to isolate the extremists.

The G8 leaders and foreign ministers, who met in Genoa in July 2001, released a statement about FYROM during the Summit, which emphasized the importance of peace and stability inside the small state. They strongly urged all parties in FYROM to demonstrate the maximum responsibility possible in order to contribute to the rapid success of the ongoing political dialogue. They declared their support for FYROM's government and their commitment to preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. The G8 finally called on all armed groups to disarm and disband voluntarily, and encouraged the adoption of the constitutional and legislative measures in FYROM that ensured the participation of all citizens in the political life of the country.

On 13 August 2001, the four major political parties of FYROM, two ethnic Slavo-Macedonian and two ethnic Albanian parties agreed on a peace formula called the Framework Agreement, after days of tense negotiations. European and US mediators were present. The NLA, which was not included in the talks, generally welcomed the agreement. Within the terms of this agreement, the key tasks are[98]:

- The NATO mission (Task Force 'Essential Harvest') had to complete the collection of the weapons voluntarily turned in by the ethnic Albanian rebels of NLA

- FYROM's Parliament had to pass multiple constitutional amendments and new laws granting more political rights and local control to the ethnic Albanian minority

- The international community had to deploy hundreds of civilian monitors and police advisers to assist in the return of tens of thousands of refugees and displaced persons to scores of villages where control is still contested

- The international community had to prepare for and be prepared to deliver at a donors conference that was promised to follow shortly after the collection of weapons and passage of the legislative package

It is believed that the peace deal, which paved the way for NATO's deployment in FYROM, will bring a political solution to the country's seven-month conflict between the government and the rebels. On the 6th of September, FYROM's Parliament gave a first-stage approval of the necessary constitutional amendments, which if passed, would give more rights to the country's ethnic Albanian population. As part of the Agreement, troops from 12 of the 19 member states of NATO deployed in FYROM started their 30-day mission to collect arms turned in by the NLA rebels. A force of up to 5,000 troops has moved to the area. The United Kingdom is leading the force on the ground, and provides the biggest contingent or about 1,900 troops. France, Greece, Germany, and Italy are also leading battalions, but hundreds of troops have been sent from elsewhere in Europe and Canada.[99] The United States is providing logistical support. NATO teams have been setting up weapon collection points, possibly as many as 15, at sites across rebel-held territory, so ethnic Albanian rebels can deposit arms. All weapons at the sites are being picked up by NATO, taken out of the country, and destroyed. NATO officials have

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[98] The full text can be found at the Presidential site of FYROM:
www.president.gov.mk/eng/info/soopstenija.asp?id=90.

[99] BBC News, NATO's Macedonia mission, Wednesday 22 August 2001, 11:53 GMT, available online at:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/in_depth/europe/2001/macedonia_crisis/.

insisted that, despite fears that the peace deal may be built on shaky foundations, they remain 'cautiously optimistic' about the prospects for peace.

Despite NATO's push to deploy its troops early and its optimism, many questions remain concerning the operation. First, the quality of the surrendered weapons during the first days of the operation was in doubt. Many observers expected the rebels to hand over only the older weapons and keep their newest armaments in case they want to use them again. Even if they do hand in significant quantities, analysts say that replacing weapons would be easily accomplished across the border with Albania, Kosovo, or other Balkan countries. Another question is how long the shaky ceasefire can hold. In fact, sporadic clashes between authorities and the NLA, as well as the death of a British soldier after his vehicle was attacked by youths thought to resent NATO's presence in their country, have happened since the peace deal was signed. In addition to these incidents, there are fears of reprisals from FYROM forces among ethnic Albanians once NATO troops have gone. The fact also remains that, despite the peace deal, FYROM's ethnic tensions have only been heightened by the months of unrest. Even with the sealed deal and NATO troops on the ground, FYROM's path back to peace may not be a smooth one, and NATO's Operation 'Essential Harvest' may yet turn into a Mission Impossible.

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# III.    FYROM'S ETHNIC IDENTITY

## A.    ETHNICITY AND NATIONALITY

Political communities comprising multiple identity groups or multicultural communities may form and hold together because of a 'thin' understanding of political community. Members of those different groups simply tolerate individuals with different backgrounds for the sole purpose of avoiding a breakdown or violence inside their society. In the case of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Slavo-Macedonians, comprising a 66 percent majority of the country's population, and a substantial ethnic Albanian minority of 23 percent according to the authorities, and 30-35 percent according to the Albanians,[100] tend to interact very little in daily life. The tensions stirred by assertions of ethnic group identity, such as flying the Albanian flag over a local city hall, are more in evidence than are the rare Albanian-Macedonian intermarriages.

The political community concept highlights the relationships among primary aspects of political development such as nation building, state building, and public policy making. Claus Offe uses the political community concept in defining the three 'transitions' of identity, institutions, and rights in Eastern Europe after the fall of communism in 1989. He states that a primal decision must be made as to who 'we' are, a decision on identity, citizenship, and the territorial as well as the social and cultural boundaries of the nation-state. Secondarily, rules, procedures, and rights should be established and make up the constitution of the 'regime'.[101] The consensus that sustains a country's political community may breakdown when decisions at Offe's primal level of who 'we' are, reject the multicultural 'we'. At that point, the borders of the multicultural regime shrink to include nothing but the ethnic groups of a nation state. The example of Yugoslavia is very characteristic. Once the purpose of sharing a multiethnic Yugoslav identity was no longer 'acceptable' by the Croats and Slovens in 1991, the two republics declared their independence. Thus, the multiethnic Yugoslav political community built by and around Tito ceased to exist. Disagreements that do not find solutions at Offe's 'second level' in the establishment of a regime for rules, procedures, rights constitute

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[100] CIA's World Factbook, available online at: www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mk.html.

[101] C. Offe, Capitalism by Democratic Design?, Social Research, winter 1991, p. 869.

another major threat to the maintenance of the political community. This happens when the regime's constitutional framework lacks legitimacy for those rejecting that consensus. The establishment of a constitutional framework in ethnically divided political communities is very difficult and involves the protection of minority rights or specific autonomy formulas when the country appears to include ethnically distinct regions. Public policies or laws that violate the human rights of minorities cause tensions between them and the rulers.

Groups that think of themselves as pushed aside in Offe's 'we' category by being denied equal rights during the three 'transitions' period[102], are those most likely desiring to separate into nation-states, to establish new political communities, and to attempt to achieve their independence. Official regimes often call such separatist communities terrorists, rebels, or criminal entities.[103] The province of Kosovo is a first example of this and FYROM a second in a situation where ethnic and social tensions exist.

At this point, a definition of the term 'ethnicity', or ethnic identity, and nationalism is, in the author's opinion, essential for understanding the complexity of the 'Macedonian identity' issue.

Ethnicity involves a sense of common ancestry, language, religion, and culture.[104] These may forge a sufficiently close 'psychological bond' of shared ethnic identity to form a nation. Nations are for Benedict Anderson 'imagined communities' because, even in the smallest nation on earth, members will never meet most of the other members, yet in their minds the image of their community exist.[105] Nationalism is the extension of this psychological bond into the political goal of forming a separate, autonomous, or independent political community.[106] As described by Peter Alter, nationalism is "the destroyer and creator of states, the bearer of strong emotions and aspirations, the mover

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[102] Identity, institutions, and rights as mentioned previously.

[103] C. Crocker, Managing Global Chaos: Sources of and Responses to International Conflict, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington DC 1996, pp. 53-77.

[104] W. Connor, Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1994, pp. 100-103.

[105] B. Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, Verso, New York 1991, p. 6.

[106] E. Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, Cornell University Press, Ithaca NY 1993, p. 1.

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of feelings of solidarity, sacrifice and hatred"[107], while for Hugh Poulton nationalism is seen

> as an activist ideological movement which aims to unite all members of a given people on the basis of a putative shared culture. As such it claims to represent the whole collective, however defined, and is antagonistic to competing cultural claims on the totality or parts of its collective, which is deemed by the adherents to constitute an actual or potential nation. [108]

Ethnic nationalism provides the cultural foundation for the identity and legitimate authority at the core of an ethnically homogeneous political community. Demands of national self-determination are threats to the peace and stability of many multinational states recognized by the international community[109], and especially those states having borders that divide ethnic groups such as Albanians who are divided between Albania, FYROM, Kosovo, and Montenegro. As a result of such threats, international law upholds a state's territorial integrity by not recognizing separatist claims. The demand for national self-determination has failed to become an established part of international law. Instead, it has remained a political principle. Nor is the term 'nation-state' usually used in modern constitutional theory to describe a type of state. It refers more to a particular relation between a state and its people.[110]

The impact of modern nationalism on Macedonia and its peoples has been momentous. It is one of the prime reasons for the area becoming the 'apple of discord' in the Balkans and the center of such intense controversy, which has continued unabated to the present, and in the past, has been responsible for much bloodshed.

A powerful weapon for nationalists is the use of history to show control of the past of an area by a state to which the modern nation can claim affinity. This issue of different Balkan nations claiming the same history and symbols as their own "is more complicated by large population migrations whereby a particular people has inhabited

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[107] P. Alter, Nationalism, Arnold, G. Britain 1989, p. 105.

[108] H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 6.

[109] In reality, in terms of universal history, nation-states are the exception, even in present and past centuries; multinational states are the rule of historical reality. As in 1916, Ignaz Seipel, the Federal Chancellor of the first Austrian Republic, wrote: "The nation-state seems only to be good as something after which one may strive; rarely can it be achieved, even for a short time, and it can never survive the long term. If it tries to maintain itself, it can do so only by resorting to an imperialism that denies the rights of other nations" (P. Alter, Nationalism, Arnold, G. Britain 1989, p. 81).

[110] P. Alter, Nationalism, Arnold, G. Britain 1989, p. 66.

different areas at different times, and the political changes whereby different states associated with different modern nations have at different times controlled the same piece of land. Macedonia is a prime example of this".[111]

## B.    'MACEDONIAN' IDENTITY

In 1991, FYROM became an independent state under the not yet recognized name 'Republic of Macedonia. The identity of this state, its name, symbols, language, and history emerged as one of the most contentious issues in the Balkans. Even the most moderate Greek historians and politicians reject the use of the adjective 'Macedonian' in describing the state that has emerged north of their border, as well as the state's population and language. Bulgarian academics and politicians accept the name 'Macedonia' as a legitimate geographic and state designation, but unanimously reject the existence of a separate Macedonian nation and language before 1944, and many of them deny its existence even after that date. Even the most levelheaded Serbian intellectuals remain skeptical about the historical existence of any fixed ethnic identity among Slavs in present-day FYROM before the 20th century. In turn, FYROM's 'Macedonian' intellectuals and politicians project the contemporary reality of their statehood, nation, and language to the 19th century and before, while many go as far back as ancient Macedonia.

All these 'schools of thought' are accepted in different degrees by non-Balkan academics and politicians, who rarely remain even-handed and instead, consciously or unconsciously, take sides in the ongoing Balkan debate on the 'Macedonian' identity. The emergence of FYROM in 1991 has given a new lease on life to the complex and ever-changing blend of history, geography, and ethnography, which since the end of the 19th century became known as the 'Macedonian Question'.

In Ottoman Macedonia at the end of the 19th century, much of the urban population had a Greek national identity because of the influence of the Greek nationalism that emerged from the Greek war of independence, and from the new Greek state. In the cities, there was also a large Jewish community.[112] The Turks were naturally present and there were also people conscious of a Bulgarian or a Serbian identity.

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[111] H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 8.

[112] They were Jews from Spain. Their largest community was located in Thessaloniki (Salonica).

However, most of the rural masses of the population had not yet developed a definite national identity. Considerations of nationality remained alien concepts to the Macedonian peasant.[113] As Duncan Perry argues, many observers noted in their travels the absence of national consciousness among Macedonia's peasantry. These men, such as H. Brailsford and G. Abbott, found "people of the soil, fixed in their immemorial villages, peasants who rarely if ever ventured beyond their own village or district, and whose identity was determined by local, regional, socio-economic and religious, but not national considerations".[114]

These people had a religious identity of 'rum' (Orthodox Christians) more often than not, and they spoke dialects that were often a mixture of Greek, Albanian, Vlach[115] and Slavonic elements. For many observers of that period, this rural Macedonian population was therefore malleable and could accept any of the three dominant Balkan identities based on Serbian, Greek, or Bulgarian Orthodoxy. The purpose of the Bulgarian 'Komitadji'[116] struggle had been to impose one of the national identities by force so as to facilitate the annexation of the territory by this or that state. The idea that it was possible to integrate the Macedonian population into one of the existing national identities found its confirmation in Bulgaria, where the Slav-speaking Macedonians did accept Bulgarian identity, whereas the Greek-speaking Macedonians of the Bulgarian territories were obliged to leave. Greece solved the problem of its 'Slavophones' in a similar way by the exchange of populations with Bulgaria which was considered a form of 'civilized' ethnic cleansing. However, Yugoslavia was unsuccessful in turning its Macedonian population into Serbs during the period between the two World Wars. In Bulgaria, there were many refugees from Yugoslav Macedonia who revitalized the Macedonian revolutionary organization (IMRO or VMRO).

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[113] D. Perry, Macedonia, Published in: G. Stokes, "Nationalism in the Balkans", Garland Publishing Inc., New York 1984, p. 177.

[114] D. Perry refers to two books. One is by H. Brailsford, Macedonia: Its Races and their Future, Methuen & Co, London 1906, p. 121. The other is by G. Abbott, The Tale of a tour in Macedonia, Edward Arnold, London, 1905.

[115] Transhumant shepherds of the area, especially of the Greek Pindus Mountains. H. Poulton argues that they are Latin-speaking people that managed to continue their culture in an area where Greek had become the norm. H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 17.

[116] The Committee armed men. The reader can refer to the previous chapter of this thesis.

As already mentioned, IMRO was at the origin of the Ilinden (St Elijah's) uprising of August 1903. Between the two World Wars, IMRO had a considerable destabilizing influence on Bulgarian political life. Yugoslav Macedonia turned into a difficult problem for Belgrade and contributed to the bad relations between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria during this period. The strategy of Tito towards the Macedonian problem has been contrary to that of pre-war Yugoslavia. Instead of trying to turn the reluctant and friendly Bulgaria population of Yugoslav Macedonia into Serbs, he proclaimed the existence of a separate Macedonian nation with the right to form its own republic inside Yugoslavia. He combined the two ideas of a Macedonian state, and that of a Macedonian nation.

The idea of a Macedonian state can be traced back to the original IMRO. The independent Macedonia that some of the first leaders of IMRO wanted to create was not, and could not, be a national state, since the Macedonian population was a mixture of different ethnic groups. In the same way, the Macedonian state advocated by the Communist International could not be founded on the basis of a Macedonian ethnic nation, since it was supposed to comprise territories with homogeneous Greek populations[117] together with the territories inhabited by Slav Macedonians.

The idea of a Macedonian nation has its origin in certain ethnographic maps from the beginning of the 20th century and has been developed by the well-known Serb geographer Jovan Cvijic. Cvijic made use of the category of 'Macedonian Slavs' or 'Macedo-Slavs' in the sense of a non-Greek Macedonian population, which, however, was neither Serb nor Bulgarian. He wanted, thus, to challenge the then-prominent idea that most of the population of Macedonia was Bulgarians. Knowing that it would be difficult to assert persuasively that the population of Macedonia was Serbs, he presented the idea that they constituted a distinct group, suggesting, thus, that their territories should not be granted automatically to Bulgaria.[118] As H. Wilkinson stated in 1951:

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[117] What is now the Greek part of Macedonia with Thessaloniki as its capital, or the 'Macedonia of the Aegean' as IMRO called this area.

[118] The name 'Macedonian' was relatively widespread among the local South Slav population, but as an indication of geographical origin rather than an ethnic attribute. The use of this term as a definition of a particular national South Slav population group was a neologism, but it was one that served the political purposes of the new leaders of Yugoslavia (Society of Macedonian studies, Macedonia: History and Politics, Ekdotike Athenon, Athens 1991, p. 26).

Cvijic's conception of the Macedo-Slavs… neatly robbed the Bulgarians of their strongest claim to Macedonia –the claim that its inhabitants were mostly Bulgarians…The beauty of Cvijic's conception was that on the surface it appeared to be a compromise between extreme Serbian and extreme Bulgarian ideas…Thus by its very moderation it commended itself to public opinion as impartial.[119]

Although Cvijic introduced the new notion of Macedonians, he was not a proponent of a Macedonian state. He considered the valley of Vardar an indispensable element of Yugoslavia from a geopolitical point of view, and therefore the Macedo-Slavs had to be integrated into the Yugoslav Nation.

By declaring the existence of a Macedonian national group, Tito applied and extended the anti-Bulgarian strategy of Cvijic, which proved most useful especially after Tito's conflict with Stalin, when Bulgaria went from being an ally to an enemy. By forming a Macedonian Republic, Tito recuperated the most radical elements of the pre-war IMRO and won the sympathy of many people friendly to the Bulgarians. This was a far from easy task. A whole population who for decades had been identified with or orientated towards the Bulgarian national ideas, and a smaller section that had had a similar orientation towards Serbia, would have to sever these bonds and adopt an entirely novel national ideology or the 'Macedonian' one. His policy concentrated on the younger generations, to which he tried to inspire a new 'Macedonian patriotism'. Thus, a Macedonian iconography has been created. The new Macedonian national myth is not different from other national myths. It is a mix of truths and fallacies. Macedonian linguists have forged the rules of a separate Macedonian language based on Macedonian dialects as distant as possible from the Bulgarian language. Up until then, it was generally accepted that the language spoken by the Slavs of Macedonia was a dialect of Bulgarian. The new 'Macedonian' written language was invented by exploiting local peculiarities and by borrowing from Serbian and other Slav languages. However, despite the efforts of so many years, the new language remains for the open-minded observer or scholar nothing more than an offshoot of Bulgarian. [120]

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[119] H. Wilkinson, Maps and Politics: A Review of Ethnographic Cartography of Macedonia, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 1951, pp. 149-50.

[120] Society of Macedonian studies, Macedonia: History and Politics, Ekdotike Athenon, Athens 1991, p. 32.

During the troubled history of the Balkans, religion has always been a factor that determined the national identity of the populations of the region. As a consequence, leaders in Skopje made efforts to create an Autocephalous Church of Macedonia, established in 1967 over the objections of the Serbian Patriarchate and the complete refusal of the remainder of the Orthodox Patriarchates and Churches to recognize it. Thus, language and church were radically altered. What remained to be done was to separate the bonds connecting the past of the Macedonian Slavs with Bulgaria and Greece.

Macedonian literature was also created. The Macedonian historians have assembled elements of the history of the peoples that have existed in the region and combined them into a unified history of Macedonia, marked by heroes like Alexander the Great, Aristotle, Cyril and Methodius, the Bulgarian Tsar Samuel (991-1014), and so forth. The efforts had two basic goals. The first was to eliminate from Macedonia any traces of other populations such as the Greeks, Bulgarians or Serbs by calling them all 'Macedonians', and the second was to establish the 'Macedonian nation' as a historical dogma, dating not from 1944, when the Socialist Republic of Macedonia was formed, but from the time the first Slav tribes settled in the area during the $7^{th}$ century AD. It is, however, only to be expected that this process of adulteration of the historical physiognomy of Macedonia and its populations should have provoked reactions on the part of the Greeks, the Bulgarians, and even the Serbs. As James Pettifer[121] argues:

> although it is difficult for non-Greeks to understand -as the generally negative international reaction to Greek objections to EU recognition of FYROM's independence has shown- the existence of Macedonia as a part of Greece has a fundamental place in the Greek political soul. Alexander the Great was a Macedonian and the period of his huge empire has a great impact on the Greek popular imagination. There is some dispute about the Greekness of Alexander's world, and many researches have been made by partisans of the different nationalities to prove certain arguments.[122] Slav scholars base their basic arguments on passages of the ancient historian

[121] Research Fellow of the European Research Institute, University of Bath, UK, Senior Associate Member of St Antony's College, Oxford, and correspondent for the London Times in the southern Balkans.

[122] The best-known statement of the Greek position is written by C. Dascalakis in his book "The Hellenism of the Ancient Macedonians", Institute of Balkan Studies, Thessaloniki 1981, in which he sets out the literary and archeological evidence as he sees it.

Plutarch.[123] Like many other academic disputes, the shortage of evidence means that both sides can continue more or less indefinitely.[124]

The misunderstanding between Greeks and 'Macedonians' is easy to explain. They both perceive the other as a robber. Macedonians consider the Greeks to have broken the geographical unity of Macedonia by annexing the region of 'Macedonia of the Aegean', whereas the Greeks consider the Macedonians to have damaged the historical unity of Greece by claiming the historical period and symbols of the Macedonian state and empire.

Typical of this contradiction of perceptions is the dialogue between the Greeks and Macedonians. The latter have made extensive use of the symbol of unified Macedonia that is a map of the whole geographical region of Macedonia. Greece has interpreted the use of this symbol as a form of irredentism, since the map of 'unified Macedonia' contains Greek territories. They respond to that by the slogan 'Macedonia is Greek', meaning that the name as well as the Greek part of Macedonia cannot be other than Greek. However, for non-Greeks, this slogan could mean that Greece seems to consider FYROM a Greek territory!

The Bulgarian perception is inspired essentially by the ethno linguistic principle. Bulgarians declare that there is no Macedonian language, and that the Slavonic dialects spoken in FYROM are simply branches of Bulgarian.[125] They argue that the Macedonian identity is artificial and does not really exist. This argument about the artificiality of the 'Macedonian nation', one that many Greek scholars also accept, rests on the assumption of a national substance to be found in 'natural' nations and one which is missing in FYROM's case. Consequently, Bulgaria either believes that there is no Macedonian nation, and Macedonians are in fact, Bulgarians[126], or when it does acknowledge it, ascribes it entirely to Serbian, Comintern, and Titoist propaganda. The official Bulgarian government has not stated that Macedonians are Bulgars, but has allowed for the

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[123] The historian describes the struggles that took place between Alexander's successors, referring to the troops as 'shouting in Macedonian'. Slav scholars conclude that this shows the existence of an autochthonous Macedonian population.

[124] J. Pettifer, The New Macedonian Question, International Affairs, London July 1999, Vol. 68, No. 3.

[125] D. Perry, Macedonia, Published in: G. Stokes, "Nationalism in the Balkans", Garland Publishing Inc., New York 1984, p. 176.

[126] Ibid. p. 181.

possibility of doing so in due time. During a conference organized on 8 March 1994 in Paris by the French Institute for International Relations (IFRI), the Bulgarian President Zhelev declared that "it is up to the inhabitants of this area, meaning FYROM, to decide what they really are", thus letting his audience understand that they had not yet done so.[127] For this reason, the Bulgarian attitude towards FYROM is that of a father who waits patiently for his child to come to its senses.[128] After all, Bulgaria was the first country to recognize the independence of FYROM as a state.[129] During the recent crisis in FYROM in 2001, the Bulgarian strategy seemed to rely on internal Macedonian problems to cause some of the Macedonians to turn to Bulgaria for help. This is perfectly justified by the military agreement with FYROM's government, and the immediate Bulgarian 'offer' in late February 2001 to send Bulgarian military aid as help against the Albanian rebels in the northwestern part of the country.

Serbs have combined the Greek and Bulgarian strategies by invoking both history and language. However, they are weaker than either the Greeks or the Bulgarians in these two areas. Their main argument is in fact geopolitical. Serbia needs to control the corridor towards the Aegean Sea to secure its communications. Instead of being a handicap, the weak position of the Serbs at the symbolic level, has turned into an advantage. Not restricted by a doctrine, their leaders have managed to find compromises and thus to set up alliances either with the Greeks against Bulgaria or with the Macedonians against both Bulgaria and Greece.

Nowadays the majority population of FYROM is firmly convinced that it forms a Macedonian nation and speaks a Macedonian language. The fact that many Greeks and Bulgarians protest that this self-identification is inaccurate carries little weight with the local people. Self-identifications means only what the people themselves say, irrespective of whether they are historically correct or not. People in FYROM argue that their nation can hardly be considered as an 'artificial' nation compared to Greece which during the 19th century changed its traditional self-identification from Romaioi to Hellenes and the language from Romaika to Hellenika which was a political act that represented the

[127] Bulgarian eyes on FYROM, Newspaper 'To Ethnos', Athens 12 March 1994.

[128] G. Gorev, Nos frères macedoniens: Propositions pour une unification singulière, Courrier International, Paris 1994, pp. 206, 212.

[129] J. Pettifer, The New Macedonian Question, International Affairs, London July 1999, Vol. 68, No. 3.

nation's shift from the Byzantine to the ancient Greek legacy.[130] They also compare the situation to the Rumanians who, at the same time, replaced the 'u' in their country's name with an 'o' in order to emphasize a closer link with ancient Rome. They both attempted to respectively re-Hellenization and re-Latinization. Romanians also changed their alphabet from Cyrillic to Latin in the 1860s. FYROM officials argue that since 1944 they have certainly copied other Balkan nations in simplifying their historical pedigree.

As a general conclusion, it can be stated that from the end of the Cold War and the emergence of the state of FYROM to the present, the structure of the Macedonian Question has changed from its traditional triangular shape[131] to a quadrangular and then to a pentagonal one. Macedonian and Albanian nationalism have been added to the Greek, Serbian, and Bulgarian one as well.

## C. ETHNIC MINORITY ISSUES

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the ethnic minority situation in FYROM has and remains one of the most complex ones in all the Balkans. The Ottomans ruled the area for over five centuries and there were inevitably some people who - forcibly or not - accepted the religion of the new rulers. These were the majority of the Albanians, large groups of Slavs; especially the Pomaks or Torbeshi or Poturs (Islamicised Slavs)[132] of the Rhodope Mountains, the Bosnians in what later became central Yugoslavia, and others. However, the Ottomans were essentially non-assimilative and multi-national without the technological capabilities to integrate those populations, unlike Western Europe where states were able to lay the foundations for the new 'nation-states'. As a result, the populations of the Balkans managed to retain their separate identities and cultures as well as returning to a sense of former 'glory' when they controlled an area, which with the national awakenings of the 19th century, they once more claimed.

FYROM is a small, mountainous country with a population of about two million people. The largest ethnic group is the Slav-Macedonians or Macedonians, although, like

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[130] Kyril Drezov, Macedonian identity: An Overview of the Major Claims, Published in: J. Pettifer, The New Macedonian Question, MacMillan Press Ltd, Gr. Britain 1999, p. 54.

[131] Involving Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria.

[132] They are descendants of the Slav population of Macedonia who converted during the Ottoman period. Their numbers have fluctuated greatly in the past censuses, 1,591 in 1953; 3,002 in 1961; 1,248 in 1971; and a dramatically increased figure of 39,555 in 1981. This last figure presumably, according to Hugh Poulton, includes many who previously declared themselves to be Turks. H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 124.

most countries in the Balkans, have a large number of ethnic minorities. The precise size of FYROM's ethnic communities is a matter of great debate. Throughout history each ethnic group has tried to inflate its numbers to support territorial claims. Census figures have also been subject to political manipulation due to the complexity of FYROM's ethnic make-up and the liability of a national identity. For example, the Human Rights Watch/Helsinki refers to the historical fact that Slav-Macedonian Muslims have been under pressure from political groups to declare that they belong to either the Turkish or the Albanian minority, and mentions ethnic Roma (Gypsies) individuals declaring themselves as ethnic Albanians or Slav-Macedonians to avoid discrimination. [133]

Since population statistics were often 'abused' in the political struggle over demands, particularly when it became to territorial autonomy, and because ethnic Albanians had boycotted the census of 1991, Ambassador G. Ahrens[134] suggested that a new, internationally monitored census should be done. The census should obtain accurate numbers first on the Albanian minority that claimed it represented a 30-40 percent of the entire population, and thus had the rights and the status of a 'nation', and second on the ethnic Serbs, who inflated their numbers in a pursuit of an independent republic. Ahrens also proposed that experts from the Council of Europe should conduct the census.

The census was conducted in the summer of 1994 under the supervision of Werner Haug from the Swiss Statistical Office and with the financial support from the EU. Geert Ahrens made personal efforts trying to convince ethnic Albanians to participate in the census. Relying on his diplomatic skills, he visited 24 different counties to talk to the population and assure their participation. [135]

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[133] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 10.

[134] German diplomat Geert Ahrens served as the Chairman of the 'Working Group' from October 1991, with a mandate from UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali. The Working Group was the first international preventive actor in FYROM, with a role in preventive diplomacy, and worked especially closely with UNPREDEP after it received a political mandate in 1994 expanding its diplomatic tasks to complement those performed by the Working Group, although cooperation primarily involved the exchange of information. Representatives from the OSCE spillover mission were occasionally participants at the trilateral forums organized by the Working Group in Skopje. A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 102.

[135] Although the Working Group left the organizing of the census to other international agencies, such as the Council of Europe and the OSCE, it played an influential role in making the new census acceptable to the Macedonian government and the ethnic Albanian leaders. A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 108.

The official results of the census of 1994 were

- Slav-Macedonians 1,288,330 (66.5%),
- Albanians 443,914 (22.9%)
- Turks 77,252 (4%)
- Roma (Gypsies) 43,732 (2.3%)
- Serbs 39,260 (2%)
- 1,962 people that did not state their ethnicity (0.1%),
- 34,960 others (1.8%).[136]

All these came to a total population of 1,936,877 persons.

After the census there was a declaration from the EU that considered it as accurate and fair, but unfortunately almost every ethnic group complained that it had been undercounted. One of the major concerns was that 1992's strict Macedonian citizenship law had been a prohibitive factor for much of the population to be counted in that census. According to this law passed on 12 October 1992 by FYROM's parliament, citizenship could be acquired by origin, by birth in the Macedonian territory, by naturalization, or by international agreements. A person, according to the law, can obtain citizenship if born in FYROM with at least one parent being a Macedonian national. If born abroad then both parents have to be 'Macedonians'. To acquire citizenship by naturalization, a person must meet a number of requirements: (1) be eighteen years old, (2) have resided continuously for at least 15 years on FYROM soil, (3) be physically and mentally healthy, (4) have living facilities and a permanent source of funds, (5) not having been convicted of a crime in his/her state or FYROM, (6) speak Macedonian, (7) accept not to endanger the security and defense of FYROM, and (8) renounce any foreign citizenship.[137]

The 15 year residency regulation in particular has been strongly criticized as very stringent given the country's situation. The High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoel, recommended that the authorities follow the practice of many OSCE states and lower this period to five years,[138] but to no avail. This requirement denied

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[136] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 10.

[137] Law of Citizenship of the 'Republic of Macedonia', Article 7. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 69.

[138] Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations, The Role of the High Commissioner on National Minorities in OSCE Conflict Prevention: An Introduction, The Hague, June 1997, p. 58.

citizenship to many members of ethnic minorities in FYROM. In June 1994, the Interior Ministry confirmed that about 150,000 people, mostly Kosovar Albanians, despite possessing identity papers from the former Yugoslavian regime and even in some cases from the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, had failed to meet the requirements of citizenship. The Albanians saw such measures as a deliberate policy to prevent them from gaining enough parliamentary seats and have the ability to veto any constitutional or legislature changes. Many Turks and Roma were also affected by this rule. The Roma in particular have been affected by the requirement to have a permanent source of funds and place of residence due to their high levels of unemployment and poverty. Additionally, the administrative fee for obtaining citizenship, at first US $50 and later US $500, is too costly for many to pay.[139] The ethnic factor in the law is further underlined by Article 11, which grants immediate citizenship to 'all Macedonians by origin, residing within the borders of the republic'.

The census of 1994 is very useful for indicating the minorities' dispersion throughout the country. Most ethnic Albanians and Turks live in rural areas in the western and northern regions.[140] Ethnic Serbs live predominantly in the north near the border with Serbia, and Romas are dispersed all over the country in cities and rural areas, and very often in ghetto-like territories. Macedonian Muslims live mostly in the west. Different ethnic groups mostly live separately and especially the Albanians and the Slav-Macedonians. Different schools, religions, places of worship, and work keep them separated from one another. FYROM had, until the end of 2000, been a place of peaceful co-habitation but with relatively little inter-ethnic communication. As the economic situation deteriorated and political lines hardened, the communications gap became larger, especially between Muslim Albanians and Orthodox Christian Slav-Macedonians. The two communities have by now very little communication with each other, and mutual distrust and suspicion is widespread. There is also an underlying wish among Albanians for Albanian unification, but at the same time they realize that after the horrors of Bosnia and Kosovo that this is impossible.[141] The investigation of this thesis into the

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[139] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 72.

[140] A large population of both groups also lives in Skopje.

[141] H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 195.

ethnic dimension of the conflict inside FYROM will be limited to the ethnic Albanians, as they are now the most 'problematic' situation for the government in terms of their demands, both political and cultural, and political mobilization.

Albanians in western Macedonia were probably the least known of the Albanian nation in the Balkans, and when the second Yugoslavia began to fall between 1989 and 1990, little or no international attention was paid to their position in the future of the Balkans. All eyes were focused on the crisis between Croatia and Serbia, and the departure of Slovenia from the federation. When the old 'Socialist Republic of Macedonia' left the federation peacefully in 1991, no one believed that the position of the Albanians, comprising about 23-25% of the population, would cause critical problems for the future of the new state, although it was well known that the Albanian and other minorities were very dissatisfied with their subordinate status inflicted on them by the Slav-Macedonian majority. Albanians had been forced to accept Tito's definitions of a 'Macedonian' identity within Yugoslavia.[142] The international community ignored the strong radical and nationalist traditions of this minority, living, as mentioned previously, mostly in the western part of the country in towns such as Tetovo, Gostivar, or in Skopje. It also ignored the fact that during the years of the 'Second Yugoslavia' these communities had resisted severe cultural and political repression, particularly during the Rankovic era, after Tito's death.[143] Islam had been an important issue as the Macedonian communities were known for their absolute commitment to it, and during the early years of the Tito period, Islamic religion and institutions had been severely repressed by the state. Vandalism and destruction of important Islamic libraries –such as that of the 'Bektashi tekke' in Tetovo- or the expropriation of Islamic religious buildings for secular use are two examples from Tito's era.

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[142] Albanians were recognized as a nationality of Yugoslavia but not as a nation. The Albanian national 'home' was outside Yugoslavia, and as such they had a number of educational and cultural rights. Ibid., p. 125.

[143] The fall of Rankovic in 1966 allowed Albanian dissatisfaction in Kosovo to come into the open, and there were large-scale demonstrations there in November 1968 calling for the granting to Kosovo of republican status, followed by similar demonstrations in Tetovo demanding that the Albanian areas of Macedonia join Kosovo in a seventh republic. The events in Kosovo in 1981 and beyond were mirrored by similar if smaller-scale nationalist manifestations by Albanians in the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, and the authorities in their increasing anxiety reacted by imposing even harder prison sentences than the authorities in Kosovo had done. The growth of Albanian nationalism in the SR of Macedonia was by most observers seen as possibly fatal, not only to the territorial integrity of the republic but even to the very existence of the 'Macedonian' nation (revival of Bulgarian, Serbian, and Greek claims) H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 126.

Another factor that influenced the situation in FYROM was the ongoing and serious crises in neighboring Kosovo, where in 1981 and 1989, and most recently in 1998, there had been widespread violence that absolutely included the Albanian populations.[144] The original catalyst for growing Albanian radicalism in FYROM came before the September 1991 referendum, in 1990, when 2,000 Albanians marched through the western town of Tetovo and demanded independence and unity with Albania. Paramilitary police broke up the march, and it was apparent to politically aware Albanians that they were likely to see many changes in their position in the new state. This was reinforced under the new constitution of FYROM which removed the rights of minorities to proportional representation in public bodies, a measure that had given Albanians at least some influence in the administration of the old Yugoslav socialist republic.[145]

In fact, since 1991 ethnic Albanians in FYROM have viewed their new state with suspicion. The Albanian members of the parliament boycotted the vote for FYROM's independence in 1991 and asked their voters not to participate in the 1992 census. Albanians also did not vote on the new 'Macedonian' constitution in 1991 due to what they claimed was its 'Macedonian' national character.[146]

New parties in the Albanian communities were created in 1992 and 1993. Also, the political elite was increasingly incapable of forming a stable administration under President Kiro Gligorov. Ethnic relations within FYROM had deteriorated sharply in

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[144] The position of ethnic Albanians in Yugoslavia began to deteriorate in the early 1980s. Albanians were increasingly purged from the communist party, state institutions and many state-run firms. The rights of ethnic Albanians deteriorated sharply when Slobodan Milosevic was in power. With communism waning, Milosevic fostered a growing sense of Serbian nationalism, directed primarily against ethnic Albanians.

[145] In the 'Socialist Republic of Macedonia' the Albanian language was spoken in local governments where ethnic Albanians constituted a sizable portion of the population. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 26.

[146] The major Albanian complaint is that they are granted a 'minority status', which relegates them to a lower position compared to the ethnic Slav-Macedonians, and are thus discriminated against. In particular, Albanians resent the wording of the preamble of Macedonia's 1994 constitution, which declares that "Macedonia is established as a national state of the Macedonian people", in which Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Romanies, and others have "full equality as citizens". FYROM's legislators have argued that the constitution is explicitly directed toward "citizens of the Republic of Macedonia", which includes ethnic Albanians. Granting ethnic Albanians the status of a nation would therefore change nothing and only exacerbate ethnic tensions because other groups would also demand to become constitutive nations.

A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 61.

November 1992 when Skopje paramilitary force fired on a peaceful protest in the Bitpazar area of the town that killed four Albanians.

A considerable change in the Albanian attitude inside FYROM occurred after 1993, when new forces emerged in the political arena, and a serious political struggle began within the PDP, which is the main Albanian party. Younger politicians articulated a radical agenda with a free market economic policy accompanied by strong nationalist rhetoric. Albanian politicians raised serious questions after the killings in Bitpazar. This in turn, led to the intervention of the EU countries, and in particular Britain. Britain was deeply involved with trying to continue the Yugoslav political project, and to keep FYROM together as a state, with the hope that it might one day reintegrate with Yugoslavia. It was clear by the following year at the London Conference that British Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd severely pressured President Kiro Gligorov to keep FYROM as close to Serbia as possible because of the possibility of its future reintegration in a future Yugoslav federation once the northern Balkan wars were over.

In early 1994, the most radical Albanian political forces won a vote to control the old PDP party, but were forced by legal controls to leave and form a new party, the PDP (Sh).[147] The two Albanian parties continually competed for popular support in elections. The Radical PDP (Sh) is led by Arben Xhaferi, and is the much larger party and controls all the Albanian towns except Skopje, while supporters of the 'pro-Gligorov' PDP[148] under Abdurrahman Aliti are located in the capital. It is significant that the EU's relations with FYROM's Albanian political leadership were, at least until the violent eruption of Kosovo in 1998 were a continual source of difficulty.  The local British, French and other EU officials in Skopje were highly pro-Macedonian in their policies, and for long periods of time had little contact with any Albanian leaders other than Abdurrahman Aliti, the leader of the 'moderate' PDP. The radical PDP (Sh) was generally regarded by many foreign diplomats and organizations in Skopje, until recently, as beyond reach, as many of them rarely visited the Albanian territories of western FYROM. By 1996, its leader

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[147] Now renamed to 'Democratic Party of the Albanians (PDsh). The Albanian language abbreviation PPDsh (PDPsh for the west) stands for Partia Per Prosperitet Demokratik Shqiptareve. Ibid, p. 62.

[148] Considered a legal successor to the original PDP. H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, pp. 189-190.

Arben Xhaferi and other radical ethnic Albanian politicians, transformed the quest for territorial autonomy into 'internal self-determination'.

Culture and education have been key issues of struggle for FYROM's Albanians, and have led to many conflicts with the government given the near total absence of higher education in the Albanian language and the decline in numbers of Albanian secondary school teachers. Although Albanians are guaranteed instruction in their language in primary grades 1-8 and secondary grades 9-12 in schools,[149] university education is available only in the Slav-Macedonian language except for the training of Albanian teachers. Albanians have therefore complained of discrimination regarding their rights for Albanian-language education, and demanded an Albanian-language university. One common Albanian complaint is that there are not enough primary and secondary schools where ethnic Albanians need them. Additionally, those that do exist are generally inferior to the ethnic Slav-Macedonian schools. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki (HRW/H) found that there were enough Albanian-language primary schools to cover the needs of Albanian population, considering the financial constraints of the Ministry of Education. As far as the secondary schools are concerned, HRW/H also found, that in many cases, at Albanians voluntarily choose not to continue their studies at this level even, as often occurs, they were accepted based on lower criteria than other ethnic Slav-Macedonian students. However, some Albanian schools, partly because of their rural locations, are poorly equipped when compared to Slav-Macedonian schools. Nevertheless, all the sides admit that Albanian primary and secondary schools generally do not provide as good an education as the Slav-Macedonian-language schools.[150]

A. Ackermann argues that all these 'educational' complaints are made by ethnic Albanians in an effort "to promote and maintain their cultural autonomy".[151] This thesis does not intend at this point to judge the FYROM government on whether or not it is

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[149] Every village with a sizable ethnic Albanian population has its own primary school, while secondary schools are located in more central towns. Albanian students can study through the 12th grade exclusively in Albanian. Consequently, at no point before attending a university do ethnic Albanian and ethnic Slav-Macedonian pupils study together. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 33.

[150] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, pp. 34-38.

[151] A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 62.

meeting its obligations to provide an education in a minority language under international law. However, the author strongly supports the right of minorities to open private schools at all levels of education and considers it a fundamental right of free expression inside a democracy. The author also believes that private schools fall under the right of preserving the culture of every minority group.

The biggest controversy over education concerns the higher levels. Although FYROM's constitution (Article 48) grants minorities the right to a primary and secondary education in their languages, it does not mention higher education. Albanian leaders frequently refer to the example of the Albanian-language University of Pristina in Kosovo that was open until the revocation of Kosovo's autonomy in 1989, and emphasizes the availability of higher education opportunities, although the mostly rural and traditional communities tend to place less emphasis on universities primarily because of economic reasons. Another factor is that many ethnic Albanians that apply to the state university of St. Cyril and Methodus in Skopje do not pass the entrance exams.[152]

Finally, an Albanian-language university was established by Professor Fadil Sulejmani in Tetovo in 1995, but it was not recognized externally, and was regarded by the authorities, and many ethnic Slav-Macedonians, as an illegal political initiative rather than a genuine attempt to improve education for ethnic Albanians, or worse, as a step toward the creation of parallel institutions and separatism.[153] In fact, FYROM's leadership was until August 2001 opposed to the Tetovo University because it would elevate Albanian to the status of an official language, which, in turn, would legitimize the status of ethnic Albanians as a nation.

After many violent clashes because of the new university, excessive use of force by the police, and violations of the right to fair trial for many ethnic Albanians arrested by the authorities, FYROM demonstrated flexibility in discussing and implementing

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[152] Some Albanian leaders claim that the state university purposefully fails ethnic Albanians on account of their ethnicity, but Human Rights Watch/Helsinki found no evidence to support this accusation. Entrance exams are graded anonymously, and students seem to be accepted based on their academic qualifications. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, pp. 39-40.

[153] Fadil Sulejmani, a former professor at Pristina University, has led the struggle for the creation of the university. In February 1995, acting without the permission of the authorities, he attempted to open the university in Tetovo, but the police moved in and during several riots one Albanian was killed.

A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 63.

alternatives, such as an Albanian-language curriculum at the Pedagogical Institute. The Tetovo University continues to exist, although it resembles less a regular university campus than the parallel institutional structures that characterized Kosovo's educational and social system. International actors, such as the OSCE mission, the OSCE's high commissioner, and UNPREDEP's chief, all had, from time to time, insisted on the need for maintaining dialogue and a policy of accommodation.[154] It currently seems that, after the recent Albanian rebel uprising during 2001, and the Framework Agreement signed by both sides on August 13 in Ochrid, now is the most opportune moment to ensure greater respect for the human and minority rights of all people in FYROM. Provisions of this Framework Agreement aim to guarantee that ethnic Albanians or other minority groups comprising at least 20 percent of the population of a municipality will be able to conduct official business and educate their children up to university level in their own language. Albanian will also be recognized as a second language throughout FYROM.[155]

The author of this thesis believes that FYROM's government does not have the right to forbid the creation and operation of private universities, although the recognition of degrees from such institutions may depend on whether the school's curriculum has met the minimum standards established by the state.

In the media sector, ethnic Albanians in FYROM complain of the lack of reporting in the Albanian language, This includes enough hours for broadcasting minority language programming on the state-run television and radio as well as of state financial support for their newspapers, radio, and television stations.[156] Despite constitutional guarantees protecting the freedom of expression, the FYROM government wielded a disproportionately strong influence over the flow of information. The state seems to hold a virtual monopoly on newspaper services. The state-run company Nova Macedonja, a hold over from the communist era, controls almost all of the country's newspaper printing and distribution, which severely limits the possibilities for an independent press. A number of private magazines and newspapers, both Slav-Macedonian and Albanian, have failed in part because they could not afford the inflated prices that Nova Macedonia

[154] Ibid., p. 71.

[155] Cited from Amnesty International official news release of 08/15/2001 at: www.amnesty-usa.org/news/2001/macedonia08152001.html

[156] H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, pp. 187-188.

demands. On May 19, 1995, the government ordered the immediate closure of 88 private radio and television stations allegedly for 'technical reasons'. Further analysis of the stations closed and their locations revealed a pattern of discrimination against the Albanian media.[157]

Another area of friction between ethnic Albanians and the government has always been the lack of representation of the minority group at all state levels. Since 1990, the government has appointed from four to five ethnic Albanians to any given cabinet and has allowed ethnic Albanians to form their own political parties and to operate their own television, radio, and newspapers. Nevertheless, many ethnic Albanians claim that they continue to be underrepresented, particularly in the armed forces, in the police, in the legal professions and courts of justice, in Ministries, and in political office. As an example, only 3 percent of police officers and only 7 percent of military personnel are ethnic Albanians. However, the government continued to take positive steps toward integration by appointing two ethnic Albanians out of nine members as justices to the Constitutional Court and by increasing Albanian on the Supreme Court from one to four out of sixteen. In addition, one ethnic Albanian was promoted to the rank of general in the army, and three were appointed ambassadors.[158] Despite these efforts, ethnic Albanian leaders continue to demand wider representation in all areas of FYROM's society. There is also the need, according to the Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, for the government to revise the electoral law to ensure that all voting districts are roughly the same size. This is necessary in order to comply with FYROM law and to guarantee individuals the fundamental right of one person-one vote.[159]

Last, but not least, the concerns of the ethnic Albanian minority include the government's violations of the right to a fair trial, and the use of excessive force by the police. During the past years, there have been at least two prominent trials of Albanian minority members in FYROM. All of them violated domestic and international law by denying the defendants the right to a fair trial before an independent and objective

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[157] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 50-51.

[158] G. Munuera, Preventing Armed Conflict in Europe: Lessons from recent experience, Institute for Security Studies- Western European Union, Paris 1994, p. 104.

[159] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 32.

tribunal. Violations in these trials are symptomatic of an underdeveloped legal system that equally affects all citizens of FYROM regardless of ethnicity. Still, these cases were directed in a very public manner against two groups of prominent ethnic Albanians and, therefore, must also be considered in an ethnic context. Beyond that, Albanians complain that FYROM police mistreat them by using excessive force. The allegations include arbitrary arrests, physical violence, and psychological pressure. However, according to HRW/H police, violence seems to be a general problem in the country and afflicts the entire population.[160] A relevant factor concerning police violence is the ethnic composition of this force. According to former Minister of Internal Affairs Ljubomir Frckovski only 4.5 percent of the police force was ethnic Albanian in 1996.[161] The under-representation of this minority group in the police was, and still is, even more evident in areas where Albanians form the majority of the population as in Tetovo or Gostivar.[162] According to the Framework Agreement signed on August 13, 2001, the goal is to create a multi-ethnic police force reflecting the overall composition of the population by July 2004. It is expected that this will in effect increase the numbers of ethnic Albanians serving in police forces to 25 percent where Albanians are a majority. Thus, around 1,000 ethnic Albanians will be recruited over the next three years. However, the new police force will remain under the control of the central government in Skopje, and will not be answerable to local leaders, as ethnic Albanians had sought. They wanted this local arrangement so that ethnic Albanian officers could run the force in majority areas.[163]

Under the Framework Agreement mentioned above, there are also some constitutional amendments that will be instituted by the government concerning the demands of ethnic Albanians and other minorities to be acknowledged as citizens of FYROM. The introduction of the constitution is being changed to remove any reference to the ethnic background of 'Macedonians'. The old introduction described the country as being the "national state of the Macedonian people", in which Albanians and other ethnic

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[160] Ibid., p. 51.

[161] By 2001 this number has increased only by half a percent (5% in total).

[162] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 29.

[163] BBC news, Peace Deal: What was Agreed, Wednesday 22 August 2001, 17:00 GMT, available online at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/in_depth/europe/2001/macedonia_crisis/.

minorities had rights as equal citizens. Under the deal, it will be changed to describe all FYROM's population as "citizens of the Republic of Macedonia".[164]

An important aspect of the crisis that FYROM has faced recently, which has not received very much attention in the West, is the growth of organized crime as a major force in the society. There is rampant corruption in Skopje. Some of this was linked to the problems with the UN sanctions against Serbia, but did not disappear when the sanctions were lifted. Recently, there has been a dramatic rise in the drug trade, as Skopje is on the heroin route from Turkey to the Adriatic coast and Italian mafia cartels. Albanian and Bulgarian mafia groups are involved in this lucrative business, and the funds generated are beginning to affect the politics and culture of FYROM, as has occurred in other places, and among other Balkan ethnic communities. The culture of weapons and violence that it engenders is a threat to a normal stable political life everywhere, as the uprising in Albania showed in the spring of 1997.[165]

In the final analysis, it is clear that the future of the FYROM Albanians cannot be considered in isolation from the development and resolution of the Albanian national question as a whole. After the rebel uprising crisis of 2001 and the final agreement of the government with the ethnic Albanians in FYROM, it remains to be seen whether this relatively new VMRO-led government will be any more successful in integrating the Albanians into the state than its predecessor.

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[164] Cited from Amnesty International official news release of 08/15/2001 at: www.amnesty-usa.org/news/2001/macedonia08152001.html.

[165] It is not certain how much small arms transfers from Albania to FYROM Albanians accelerated in 1997-98, and how many of them were already collected by NATO forces after the Framework Agreement of August 2001, but there are many stories in Skopje newspapers that suggest there are still sizeable quantities of small arms and ammunition stored in the western FYROM countryside.

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# IV.    THE NEW STATE

## A.    ECONOMY

Already the poorest republic of the second Yugoslavia, FYROM's economic status has further declined since its independence in 1991. The dissolution of the former Yugoslav Federation was a serious blow to the country's economy as it deprived FYROM of key protected markets and large transfer payments from the center. It was also very difficult for the weak state to transition to a market economy. The closure of inefficient state firms has hurt production and caused a sudden rise in unemployment, something largely unknown during communism. An estimated 25-30 percent of the workforce is unemployed. However, in the year following the introduction of the new 'denar', FYROM's currency, in April 1992, the astuteness of separating the currency from the hyperinflation caused by the war in former Yugoslavia became evident. Independence allowed FYROM to escape from financing the ruinous war, as was reflected in 1993 in the rising strength of the denar over the dinar (Serbia's currency) as average monthly wages were 100 DM in FYROM instead of 20-30 DM in Serbia or Montenegro.

In the socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 'Macedonia' was very much on the edge of the sidelines. With Albania having very little contact with its neighbors, and Bulgaria in COMECON, cities like Debar or Strumica were isolated. All contact with the rest of Europe was through the northern borders with Serbia, or through Greece in the south, even though geographically, Albania is closer to Italy. There is still no direct rail link with Bulgaria. The old telecommunications system went through Belgrade, Sarajevo, and Zagreb before reaching the rest of Europe, and the wars in Yugoslavia have severed most of those links. Most of them went along the old traditional route of Nis-Skopje-Thessaloniki.

It is by now very obvious to observers that the geopolitics of the southern Balkans has had the most catastrophic effect on the country's economic development. First, the United Nations sanctions against Yugoslavia, imposed from mid-1992 until the end of 1995, cut FYROM off from Serbia, its most important trading partner until that time.

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Trading in violation of the sanctions was very common, but the flow of goods was still lower than the normal level of trade would have been with open borders.[166] Secondly, it was the Greek embargo in February 16, 1994 that lasted eighteen months and caused considerable damage to FYROM's economy mostly because it stopped much needed oil supplies by denying access to the major port of the region, Thessaloniki.[167] The embargo, as stated in Chapter II of this thesis, was imposed to protest FYROM's name, flag and articles in its constitution that, according to the Greek government of Andreas Papandreou and the rest of the political forces, implied territorial claims on the Greek province of the same name. On September 13, 1995, with the assistance of the UN and mediators from the United States, Greece and FYROM came to an interim agreement that involved the lifting of the embargo in return for changing the flag.[168] The agreement stipulated that Greece and FYROM negotiate compromises on their outstanding differences and work toward improving bilateral relations.

Despite this positive development, the embargo had already caused considerable damage to FYROM. Estimates put the country's losses at $40 million per month.[169] Since FYROM had been greatly dependent on using the Greek port of Thessaloniki, and because it lacked alternative transit routes, the country's economic activities were severely curtailed. Moreover, UN sanctions against the former Yugoslavia created further economic losses. Greece's objections to FYROM's name also delayed the country's entrance into major international organizations, such as the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The lack of international recognition made it more difficult to obtain international credit and assistance from international monetary agencies like the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund. Altogether, the UN estimates that the embargo and sanctions cost FYROM $4 billion in lost income.[170]

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[166] According to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, up to 1,000 lorries crossed the FYROM-Serbia borders every week during the sanctions. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 11.

[167] The Greek government had already imposed an earlier embargo in August 1992 which lasted three months.

[168] FYROM had already amended its constitution in 1992 to recognize the inviolability of international borders and state that it would not interfere in the internal affairs of neighboring countries. The issue of the name remains to be resolved. A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 73.

[169] D. Perry, On the Road to Stability-or Destruction?, Transition, August 25 1995, pp. 40-48.

[170] MILS News, February 2, 1996.

In November 1992, FYROM's President Kiro Gligorov wrote an open letter to the Secretary General of the UN, Boutros Ghali. Among other things, he said that the main commercial routes of his country were entirely blocked. To the north as a result of the sanctions against Yugoslavia by the Security Council, and to the south as a result of the arbitrarily imposed economic blockade by Greece. The small number of roads to the west and east were inadequate and the network undeveloped. Gligorov appealed to the UN to exert pressure on Greece so that it might stop its economic blockade against a state that has no access to the sea except for the port of Thessaloniki. The devastating damage from economic blockades is even more obvious when considering that the economic power in FYROM was fairly modest even when the transfer of goods was unhindered. In 1990, socialist 'Macedonia' contributed less than 6 percent of the total gross social product of Yugoslavia, while it comprised 9 percent of the population and 10 percent of Yugoslavian territory.[171] The contribution of industry, concentrated in its capital Skopje, was 41 percent of the gross social product of 'Macedonia' and was followed by agriculture, accounting for 25 percent. Tourism and communications came next. Metallurgy, chemistry, textile and tobacco processing appeared in relatively small enterprises, which were mainly directed towards local markets. There was no 'Macedonian' company that could acquire international importance.

FYROM's industry is neither modern nor competitive. Agriculture is dominated by a single cultivation: tobacco. On the other hand, this tobacco contains a large percentage of tar, so it will be not possible to compete in European markets where high quality is a prerequisite. In general, the land is exhausted by the unlimited cultivation of the soil. Therefore, substantial investments are needed for a better future. As James Pettifer argues, this country does not have the necessary means at its disposal.[172] Foreign exchange reserves to support the new currency, the denar, are very modest. In 1993, they amounted to $59 million, and in 1990, money orders from 'Macedonian' workers working abroad still amounted to $168 million, but owing to the unstable political situation they fell to $8.6 million in 1992. Yet, the contribution of those workers from

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[171] Information Service of Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, July 1992, p. 25.

[172] J. Pettifer, Die neue Mazedonienfrage, Europaische Rundschau, vol. 20, 1992 (4), p. 49.

abroad is considerable. There are many families in the country that would have by now been in dire straits without that money sent by relatives working abroad.

In 1992, the gross social product decreased further by 15 percent and investments by 24 percent. The economic blockades had resulted in making the state's borders seem like the borders of its economy also. As a result of these conditions, economic production has dropped sharply. The government claims that the gross social product per capita fell from $1,419 in 1987 to $720 in 1993. While it is in the government's interest to overemphasize the effects of the embargo and sanctions, there is no question that the economy has deteriorated greatly during the past years. Social tension has increased as a result, especially between the different ethnic minorities. In discussions with various ethnic groups, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki noticed that each group tended to perceive itself as the main victim of the country's economic woes. While unemployment has affected all citizens of FYROM, each ethnic group, including ethnic Slav-Macedonians, thought it was suffering the most as a result of discrimination.[173]

In recent years, the FYROM government has tried to form a free market environment as a first step to attracting foreign investment into the country, and create institutional reforms to achieve macro-economic stability. This program involves Free Trade Zones, Value Added Tax, and new customs laws. Whereas inflation no longer seems to be a serious threat to economic development, unemployment remains very high, and the current account deficit increased further. Pursuing the course of trade liberalization, economic presence in the region, and the process of European integration, the republic has signed an economic co-operation agreement with the EU and several Free Trade Agreements with a number of countries, Greece not excluded. In fact, despite the lingering name dispute, Greece and FYROM have managed to find common ground. In 2000, economic investments expanded, and defense cooperation joined the crime fighting agreements of 1999 on the road to conciliation. FYROM's economy, struggling for stability since gaining independence, suffered further after the war in Kosovo and from the recent ethnic Albanian violence inside the country.

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[173] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 12.

Most of the foreign investment came from Greece, which in November 1999, launched the largest single foreign venture with the joint construction of a 230 kilometer oil pipeline connecting OKTA, FYROM's only oil refinery, with Thessaloniki. As part of a $182 million package deal signed in May 1999; Hellenic Petroleum acquired a majority stake in OKTA, with Greece paying $80 million of the $90 million construction costs. Major Greek investments in their neighbor's struggling economy continued in 2000, when the National Bank of Greece, the country's largest commercial financial institution, bought out FYROM's Stopanska Bank for 116 million German marks. Media reports following an October Balkan Summit in Skopje cited sources close to FYROM's President Boris Trajkovski as discussing economic cooperation with the Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis during a closed-doors meeting. A FYROM initiative in May 2000 to abolish visa requirements for Greek citizens was reciprocated in November of the same year, when Greece announced plans to issue one-year multiple entry visas to FYROM residents, who will also be allowed to travel visa-free to European Union countries participating in the Schengen Treaty. Economic cooperation between the two countries is now easier due to a new customs post inaugurated in December 2000 on the northern side of the Greek-FYROM border.

EU's plans to help bring about a rapid increase in stability in FYROM after all the ethnic Albanian violence are to contribute 40 million Euros to improve the situation for the Albanian minority. Support will be given, inter alia, to the Albanian-speaking University in Tetovo and to the Albanian speaking TV and radio stations. This was discussed and agreed at the European Council's dinner on March 23, 2001, between the EU heads of state and government and the foreign ministers.[174]

Recent economic indexes include a GDP of $7.6 billion (1999), GDP-real growth rate of 2.5% (1999), GDP per capita $3,800 (1999), unemployment rate 35% (1999), an industrial production growth rate of -2% (1999), dept-external of $1.7 billion (1998), and economic aid of $10.5 million from Taiwan and $100 million from the EU (1999)[175].

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[174] Cited from EU's official site, available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/fyrom/.

[175] Cited from CIA's World Factbook, available online at: www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mk.html.

The general situation of the economy remains in transition from the old Communist Yugoslav system to a market-based one. Most state-controlled companies have been privatized, and economically unviable enterprises restructured at a very high percentage. One negative aspect of the country's image is the growth of corruption. The increase in the private sector and the decline and bankruptcy of social ownership made it easy for shady dealings to thrive. It was fairly usual for directors of social firms to own private ones or use intermediaries to buy them cheaply with the potential for large profits. The directors also availed themselves of the opportunity to drive companies intentionally into bankruptcy so that they could then purchase them at a better price. The connections of these new entrepreneurs with the Crvenkovski government made some political and economical observers see FYROM's system as being very similar to those of Latin American countries, such as the 'Colombian syndrome', and refer to such practices as de facto 'criminal privatization'.[176]

Continued economic recovery depends on FYROM's ability to attract more foreign investment, to broaden trade ties with Greece, Serbia, and Montenegro, and to maintain its commitment to economic liberalization. The economy can meet its basic food needs but depends on outside sources for all of its oil and gas, and most of its modern machinery and parts.

## B.    REGIONAL-INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

FYROM is wedged between four regionally powerful neighbors or the four 'Wolves'. Greece is to the south, Serbia to the north, Bulgaria to the east, and Albania to the west. FYROM's population and territory are the smallest when compared to them and the GNP is the second smallest. Albanian's GNP is the smallest. FYROM has the lowest total number of active and reserve soldiers and the smallest number of military planes. Reportedly, the FYROM army still lacks heavy armament, and it is unlikely that the government would use its rather poor hard currency reserves or other resources to buy weapons. In addition, it is known that FYROM has an underdeveloped economy.[177]

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[176] H. Poulton, Who are the Macedonians?, Hurst & Company, London 2000, p. 213.

[177] FYROM's only comparative economic advantages can be seen in agricultural and mineral resources as these were spared the devastation of war; and in the support of a large number of economic emigrants in the United States, Canada, and Australia. Since over 80 percent of the country's trade used to be with Belgrade, it seems that the UN sanctions against Yugoslavia severely damaged FYROM's economy.

Although Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece occupied various parts of the Macedonian territory until the creation of the second Yugoslavia after WW II, since 1991, only Serbia has become a major problem to FYROM with violent conflicts expected to emanate from the north. Greece's foreign policy, although destabilizing for FYROM's economy, was not anticipated to trigger violent actions. For a while, it seemed that the potential for conflict had decreased in intensity because of the Dayton Peace Accords in Bosnia in 1995, the accord between Greece and FYROM in 1995, and the agreement between Serbia and FYROM in 1996. However, the war in Kosovo between 1998 and 1999, and the internal conflict with FYROM's ethnic Albanian rebels in 2001 reminded the whole world that southeastern Europe can very easy explode with surprising developments.

Initial difficulties between FYROM and Albania and between FYROM and Bulgaria following FYROM's independence have been largely resolved in the diplomatic arena, and the differences now center on nationalist concerns and sentiments. It is not possible to fully describe the different positions of all four of these countries or of the other international actors such as the EU or NATO towards the new state of FYROM. A general survey of the main factors that are likely to affect the situation in the near future follows.

### 1.    Albania

Although FYROM's relations with Albania have not produced the same level of anxiety among the leadership of the state as those with Greece or Serbia, there have been concerns in FYROM as well as in all neighboring states over Albania's intentions to support ethnic Albanians. There is a certain complexity to Albania's role in this area because of the country's 'special' relations with ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, Montenegro, and FYROM. Several 'Macedonian' analysts continue to believe that FYROM's greatest danger is not from Serbia or Greece, but from modern Albania. One could also assume that domestic political considerations in Skopje have influenced President Kiro Gligorov and his government to downplay the threat from Albania, particularly since the ethnic Albanian PDMP was a member in the governing coalition, and to feel a false sense of security from the presence of a small number of UN forces as observers in FYROM.

In Albania, the formation of FYROM had been relatively welcomed[178], primarily because it was seen as a counterbalance to Serbia and an irritant to Greece. Nevertheless, Albania recognizes a 'Macedonian' state only if it is not exclusively that of the 'Macedonian' people. Cultural relations were closer for some time under Tito and the later years of Yugoslavia, but Albanian nationalism grew very rapidly in the northern and western parts of FYROM where Albanians are dominant in the population and especially after the war in Kosovo. This sizable Albanian minority is the main point of contention between the two states.[179] The relationship between them began to improve once the Tirana government moved away from irredentist nationalism and adopted a more moderate foreign policy. Since coming in power (1992), Albanian President Sali Berisha tried to appear more concerned about the rights of ethnic Albanians in FYROM, but he generally maintained a moderate position. In June 1992, Gligorov and Berisha discussed a new aspect in Albanian-FYROM relations, followed by the opening of an Albanian diplomatic mission in Skopje in 1993 and a mutual cooperation treaty.[180] Another Albanian official, Prime Minister Fatos Nano, visited Skopje in January 1998.[181] A number of bilateral agreements have been signed, but the Albanians once more expressed their concern over the treatment of the large Albanian ethnic minority in FYROM. FYROM officials, for their part, had been pressing Albanians to take more action against gangs of bandits, which, since Albania's civil unrest, had been roaming the border areas.

Tirana's government believes that FYROM's census statistics downplay the size of the Albanian ethnic element in FYROM, and stated that the minority makes up almost 40 percent of the population. Although Albanian President Sali Berisha advocated a diplomatic solution to the issue in the past, he made it known that if war ever breaks out in FYROM, Tirana would not remain idle but rather would come to the rescue of its brethren. On the other hand, reportedly, the Berisha and all the subsequent Albanian

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[178] Albania was one of the first countries to recognize FYROM and after initial objections, supported its entrance into the OSCE. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 14.

[179] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 14.

[180] In 1994, during the Greek embargo, Albania also made its port of Durres available to FYROM's economic needs. A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 75, also in Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 14.

[181] The first visit by an Albanian Prime Minister since FYROM became independent.

governments are terrified at the possibility that Albania might have to care for thousands of ethnic Albanian refugees who would likely cross the border in case of a general war in FYROM. The very recent case of the war in Kosovo has been a great example of this. As A. Ackermann states, "Albania, despite its rhetoric and diplomatic meddling, is also aware that FYROM's stability is crucial for the region and that moderation needs to be exercised in its relations with FYROM". [182]

## 2.    Serbia

FYROM is the only former Yugoslav republic to gain independence without bloodshed. Since JNA was withdrawn from FYROM in 1992, without leaving behind a possible piece of military equipment, Yugoslavia has recognized the 'Macedonian nation' but for a long time refused to recognize the new independent state. Some authors have held the view that FYROM was nothing more than the southern province of Serbia[183] until Tito advanced and supported the idea of a distinct 'Macedonian nationality'[184] and helped in the separation of the 'Macedonian' Orthodox Church, which has never been accepted by neither the Serbian Orthodox Church nor the Patriarchate of Constantinople. It was noted that the 'Macedonian' church received a separate identity a generation ago, but it was still under the Serb Patriarchate in Nis. The Serb, Bulgarian, and Greek churches informed the Russian church that they would not attend its millennium celebration in 1987 if the 'Macedonian' church was invited on a same par as them.

Although FYROM and Serbia have no bigger mutual territorial claims, some minor border incidents used to happen from time to time, and relations have been tense but stable. Both sides have different interpretations of where the border really lies, and the UN has had to intervene on occasion to avoid possible conflict. In 1994, Serbian military forces temporarily seized a small area on FYROM's side of the border drawn by the UN. Twelve out of nineteen border incidents from April to June 1994 involved

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[182] A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 75.

[183] Contemporary FYROM town of Prilep used to be the capital of the medieval Tsar Dusan's 'Greater Serbia'. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 15.

[184] It was stressed that creating new political nations was often accompanied by frenetic work to develop a cultural infrastructure. In the case of the 'Macedonians', for example, a well-known Harvard Slavicist, Horace Landt, was brought in to create grammar for the 'Macedonian language'.

Serbian incursions into FYROM territory, or clashes between UN troops and Serbian border patrols.

The Serbian minority in FYROM is mostly concentrated along the northern border, and the Yugoslav government demanded equal treatment for the Serbs and other minorities in FYROM's constitution as well as in the authorities' procedures. However, it was stressed that this demand was not a precondition for the normalization of relations between the two states, so Belgrade has not taken an aggressive stance on this issue as it did in other parts of the former Yugoslavia.[185] The precondition for the normalization used to involve reaching a solution to the dispute between the Skopje and Athens governments. Serbia's calling FYROM an 'artificial nation' was much resented in its close alliance with Greece during the embargo. In 1992, Milosevic suggested to the Greek government that FYROM be carved up between Greece and Serbia. A. Ackermann's information gathered from interviews with government officials indicate that Milosevic had plans to arrest all FYROM's political leaders immediately following independence, and to replace them with Serb politicians.[186]

As FYROM authorities believed that Serbia had never given up its intention to control its southern neighbor, they perceived their main threat to be from the north. The government in Skopje feared that when the Belgrade government would no longer be preoccupied with conflicts in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, or Kosovo, it would turn its guns against FYROM. President Gligorov's request for a UN preventive force in FYROM was largely directed toward averting the fate of a possible spill over of the war in Bosnia. One of the major tasks for UN peacekeepers was to guard the FYROM border with Serbia and to deal with the border encroachments. However, all those fears seemed to have diminished since FYROM and Serbia mutually recognized each other on April 8, 1996. They both agreed to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of each other. A last, but continuing serious threat to FYROM's security is the situation in Kosovo. Although the United States and Europe have finally intervened, the danger for FYROM remains as long as there is no viable political settlement to the

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[185] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 15.

[186] A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 72.

Kosovo issue. After all, the main goal of Serbian policy is now to allow FYROM to become a dependent state, but if any of the surrounding powers, especially Bulgaria, increased their influence in Skopje dramatically, or took matters as far as territorial revision int their own hands, then Belgrade would believe that it would have to act. At the moment, Serbian interests are served by a policy of inactivity, with the hope that FYROM will turn to Serbia for protection as its least offensive neighbor.

### 3.    Bulgaria

In both World Wars, Bulgarian soldiers occupied Macedonia and tried to apply the concept of the 'Greater Bulgaria'. After WW II, Bulgaria recognized the existence of the 'Macedonian' minority, [187] but subsequently denied it as well as the existence of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria.[188] The Bulgarian government has held the view that the 'Macedonian' language is a Bulgarian dialect having no special status in Bulgaria itself, and, consequently, 'Macedonians' have been Bulgarians 'by language'. Thus Bulgaria, although one of the first countries to recognize FYROM as an independent state,[189] has refused to recognize the existence of a distinct 'Macedonian' nationality. For Bulgaria, FYROM is considered as simply another state with Bulgarians. FYROM officials view this denial more as a nuisance than as a serious foreign policy problem. Indeed, President Gligorov referred to it in 1995 as "a typical Balkan irrational dispute, as is the conflict with Greece over the name Macedonia and the symbols that go with it".[190]

Like Albania, Bulgaria is also interested in maintaining stability in the region, and apart from the issues of nationality and language, relations between the two states are cordial. Bulgaria has officially declared that it has no territorial ambitions toward FYROM, and trade between them has increased[191], with more transportation and communication lines connecting Sofia and Skopje. It remains to be seen how far the natural struggle for a regional sphere of influence will be seen by other neighboring states

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[187] In the 1956 census, over 63 percent of the Pirin Macedonia population of about 187,000 people declared themselves to be 'Macedonians'.

[188] In 1985, Stanko Todorov, a member of the Bulgarian communist party Politburo, declared Bulgaria to be a single-nation country.

[189] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 16.

[190] J. Reuter, Interview mit dem Prasidenten der Republik Makedonien Kiro Gligorov, Sudosteuropa 44 no. 8, 1995, p. 511.

[191] Especially during and after the Greek embargo.

as an attempt at economic and later, at political and military integration. It is also possible that the long quiescent notion of a Balkan Federation will re-emerge as an expression of Bulgarian policy.

### 4. Greece

In Greece, the demise of Yugoslavia was accepted later and with more reluctance than in almost any other state in the world. Important Greek trade routes pass through Yugoslavia, and Yugoslav stability was important for economic reasons. However, the economic problems pale in significance beside the emergence of the new proto-Macedonian state, a development which all the Greek politicians would have regarded as unthinkable as recently as nine months prior to 1991. Pressing priorities from the north (Croatia, Slovenia) and from Kosovo had led Milosevic's Serbia to the withdrawal of its army from FYROM, to the painful surprise of the Greeks, who belatedly realized that they were acquiring a new neighbor to their north free of Belgrade's influences.

The problems about the ancient cultural heritage or the use of the name and symbols of ancient Macedonia have been referred to in other chapters. A more potent heritage, in terms of recent history, is the bitterness from the Greek civil war after WW II and until 1949, in which many of the Slav-speaking population of northern Greece became communists and became involved in the guerrilla army against the governmental forces. When the war ended with victory of the right political forces helped by the western Allies, many of them went into exile in Skopje, and have risen to influential positions. According to some people in Athens, there is an element of revenge here. In addition to reopening a difficult international and regional issue, the new Macedonian question also risks reopening the wounds and unresolved internal controversies in Greece remaining from the civil war.

The official responses of the Greek government to the emergence of FYROM are well articulated in this thesis. Greece used whatever leverage it could within the EU and the UN to prevent the recognition of a state called 'Macedonia' and attempted to base diplomatic initiatives on the assumption that some sort of a new Yugoslav federation could emerge that would include FYROM as a component part. Greek relations with FYROM continued to be highly strained until late 1999, when the Greek government of Costas Simitis, after nearly a decade of estrangement, has warmed relations with Skopje.

The main bone of contention, the disputed name, remains, but a solution appears closer than ever. Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou, in an interview at BBC's world service, stated earlier this year (2001) that what is now new is that Greece and FYROM are viewing this issue as friends, not opponents, and they are trying to find a solution respecting both sides' sensitivity without any mutual antagonism.

Following an interim agreement in 1995, Greece lifted a crippling border embargo it had imposed a year earlier. That year, Skopje placated Athens by approving a new national flag. Such political baby steps spawned a series of other initiatives that have led to the last years' improved relations between the two neighbors. In 2000, Greek economic investments expanded in FYROM and defense cooperation, included in the crime-fighting agreements of 1999, have paved the road to conciliation.

Despite the apparent progress in relations, the name issue casts a shadow over otherwise productive low-level initiatives between the two countries. At the time of the pipeline venture[192], outgoing FYROM President Kiro Gligorov argued that one of his country's most important companies should not be controlled by foreign interests, despite the economic benefit it would bring. On the Greek side, there have also been complaints.[193] In February 2001, the Greek Foreign Minister admitted in an interview for FYROM television that emotional discomfort exists still on the name issue on both sides, and thus a solution will in no way be 100 percent pleasing to both countries.

Despite all the above statements, Greek analysts are in a most awkward position when confronted with FYROM, as they do not know for what to wish. An eventual disappearance of FYROM as a state will open a Pandora's box and could lead to a diplomatic and military disaster for the entire region. On the other hand, it is true that irredentism is inherent in the 'Macedonian' iconography. A consolidated FYROM could, soon or later, make some kind of claim on Greek and Bulgarian 'Macedonia' areas.

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[192] See 'Economy' in the same chapter.

[193] In February 2001, leading PASOK political party deputy S. Papathemelis inquired about leaks from Skopje regarding the compound names 'North' or 'New Macedonia' as potential solutions. He was referring to a state-run Athens News Agency report about a publication from FYROM's daily newspaper DNEVNIK that cited anonymous FYROM government officials as alleging that Greece had unofficially proposed a package of offers to FYROM in exchange for settling the name issue. The Greek suggestion, according to the news agency, consisted of political and economic support, FYROM's induction into the peripheral programs of the EU, support of its accession into NATO and the EU, and an increase of Greek investments.

However, it is difficult to imagine the conditions under which such claims would be satisfying, since the population of the 'Macedonia of the Aegean' is almost 100 percent Greek, and the inhabitants of the 'Macedonia of the Pirin' have been Bulgarized. However, the perplexity of the Greek political and intellectual leaders has made it possible for the most irresponsible elements of Greek public life to rouse public opinion. The embargo policy, which had worsened the economic, social, and political situation in FYROM, had by far been a result of public and media pressure on a rather weak Greek government. Greece, according to the author of this thesis, had taken the wrong steps in its Balkan policy. In fact, even if there is a contradiction around the name of the relatively new state that may create problems in the future, the two countries have a vital common interest that concerns the present, and that is making peace prevail.

### 5. International Community

Since declaring its independence, FYROM has continuously struggled for international recognition under the name 'Republic of Macedonia', impeded mostly by barriers imposed by Greece. Acceptance into some of the major international institutions such as the Council of Europe, OSCE, and PfP was until 1995 blocked by Greek complaints over the use of the name 'Macedonia', the symbols of the new state, and article 49 of the 1991 FYROM constitution.[194] In late 1991, the European Union announced the conditions under which it would recognize the newly independent countries of the former Yugoslavia. These included the new states' promise to respect minority rights, relinquish territorial claims and pledge that it would not engage in hostile acts against another state.[195] In early 1993, the EU announced that of the four former Yugoslav republics seeking recognition, only FYROM and Slovenia fulfilled all of the requirements. Despite this, on January 15, 1993, the EU extended formal recognition only to Croatia and Slovenia, with Bosnia-Herzegovina being recognized three months later.

FYROM was admitted to the United Nations in April 1993 under the provisional name of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), and recognized a

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[194] The Greek government claimed that article 49 encouraged territorial ambitions toward the Greek province of Macedonia, by stipulating: "The Republic is concerned with the situation and the rights of adherents of the Macedonian people who live in neighboring countries and émigrés from Macedonia". A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 73.

[195] In spite of the Badinter Arbitration Commission opinion that only Slovenia and FYROM met the necessary criteria for recognition, until the end of July 1992, neither the EU nor other subjects had decided to recognize FYROM because of Greece's objections.

month later by the EU. Since the normalization of Greek-FYROM relations, after an agreement signed by both countries at the UN Headquarters in New York in September 1995, the doors to other international institutions opened for FYROM. The new country was admitted into the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Today, the country cooperates with all of these institutions on a variety of levels, and has expressed a very serious interest in joining NATO[196] and the EU.

In FYROM, the international community has promoted measures such as putting in place peacekeeping forces mainly concerned with avoiding any spillover of the conflict in southeastern Europe, and in response to requests by President Gligorov, with the support of the then President of the United States, G. Bush, for international guarantees concerning the country's security. The multiplicity of preventive measures adopted, together with the coordination between international organizations, make FYROM's case an example of conflict prevention. In September 1992, the CSCE/OSCE[197], initially directed at responding to the management of interstate rather than intrastate conflicts, sent a 'Spillover Monitoring Mission' to monitor the border between FYROM and Serbia. In parallel, in December 1992, the UN set up UNPROFOR, later renamed as UNPREDEP[198], its first preventive mission, which also had a dual, civil and military mandate covering traditional peacekeeping task related to the social and political situation under the responsibility of a special UN representative, early warning by means of observation and reporting, and the exercise of good offices, added in March 1994 in order to adapt the mission to the developing internal situation. It also had an additional; deterrent function through its military component, which is partly American; whose symbolic task was the first involvement of the United States Army on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.[199]

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[196] FYROM is one of the nine countries that have requested to join the alliance. The others are the three Baltic States, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania.

[197] One of the first international organizations that arrived in the country in a preventive role. A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 130.

[198] Following a request from President Gligorov, UN Security Council Resolution No. 795 authorized the full deployment of a UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to FYROM. Sweden, Norway and Finland committed 700 troops, and the United States agreed to send an additional of 300 troops six months later. As of April 1996, there were 1,120 peacekeeping soldiers in the country, 549 of whom were American. The force was later renamed Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, A Threat to Stability: Human Rights Violations in Macedonia, United States of America 1996, p. 104.

[199] B. Furlong, Power keg of the Balkans, International Defense Review, vol. 26, no 5, May 1993, p. 366.

The EU role was limited in the first years of FYROM's life as a state due to a disagreement between member states concerning the recognition of independence and consequently concerning the policy adopted by Greece. EU has since made up for lost time by increasing economic aid according to the PHARE program and has signed an Association Agreement with FYROM in 1996. In some ways, certain initiatives taken to stabilize FYROM constitute an example of effective coordination between international organizations. This was, thus, the case with the succession of those nominated to mediate between Greece and FYROM, by the EU (Hans van den Broek), the UN (Cyrus Vance, and then Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance as EU and UN mediators), and bilaterally by the United States (Matthew Nimetz). The Association Agreement with the EU and the economic aid have helped encourage FYROM's continued internal reform, an asset that was more systematically and effectively used in the immediate future.

At this point, it is very useful to mention that the importance of belonging to Europe is a recurring theme in FYROM's foreign policy orientation. In the view of FYROM political leaders, membership in European institutions offers three significant advantages. First, integration with Europe facilitates FYROM's transition to democracy and to a free-market economy. Second, it helps fill the security vacuum created by the Yugoslav wars. The sentiment that membership in the OSCE and in NATO's PfP provides an institutional framework to ensure FYROM's security is widespread. As a third significant advantage, FYROM's European association promises, by promoting a European rather than a 'Macedonian' outlook, to keep in check an emergent, divisive nationalism, like which the country faced during 2001. It is very important to state that even the most nationalist ethnic Albanian leaders in FYROM emphasize the need to identify with Europe, and are appreciative of the role UNPREDEP[200] has played in protecting the country from outside aggression. There is agreement from all political forces in FYROM that the UN's presence has helped to deter potential aggressors. In pursuit of their own cultural and political aims, ethnic minorities in FYROM embrace

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[200] The primary mission of the force is to monitor FYROM's border with Serbia and Albania. In addition, the UN mission deals with internal threats to stability, particularly FYROM's fragile inter-ethnic relations. Finally, UNPREDEP acts as a liaison between FYROM and the leadership of Serbia in Belgrade. It also helps to coordinate the work of the many organizations active in the country (OSCE, International Red Cross and MACSAM, EU's team to monitor UN sanctions, etc.)

European structures and values, and the importance Europe attaches to the protection of minority rights.[201]

The EU is now playing an unusually active political role in trying to resolve the recent crisis in FYROM. The EU had -and it definitely took- the opportunity to demonstrate that it can conduct an effective foreign policy. There have been detailed European recommendations to both the conflicting parties in FYROM on the country's constitution, education, language, and participation in public life. From the first moment the crisis occurred, it seemed natural for the EU, in the guise of Mr Solana and Mr Patten, to become involved in the attempt to promote an agreement between ethnic Albanians and Slav-Macedonians. Before taking part in the negotiations in FYROM, Solana and Patten participated in a joint EU-NATO meeting both to bolster their mission and to emphasize that the two organizations would not be duplicating their efforts.[202] Some European observers argue that the EU and NATO are now picking up the pieces from the former mistaken policy of giving too much support to the Albanian guerrillas in Kosovo.[203] However, it is also important to state that the Union is still hampered in playing a global role by its very nature. A total of 15 member states must all agree on policy even though no European military capacity equivalent to that of the United States exists. Nevertheless, not a single objection can be raised that EU's role to the final Framework Agreement between the government and ethnic Albanians in FYROM was not very important.

NATO, on the other hand, accused by many of doing too little to prevent the recent ethnic minority crisis in FYROM, has been reluctant to become involved in another open-ended Balkan commitment. It took the Atlantic Alliance more than the first half of 2001 to recognize the problem of ethnic Albanian rebels and begin to rethink the

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[201] A. Ackermann, Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia, Syracuse University Press, New York 1999, p. 145.

[202] EU's main lever on the FYROM government was economic aid, and the carrot was eventual membership in the Union.

[203] The Alliance repeatedly claimed that it was not fighting on behalf of the Albanians, despite the fact that the only beneficiaries of the 1999 operation were the Albanians. NATO loudly condemned Albanian terrorism but somehow managed to bomb only Yugoslav military targets. The war was also supposed to protect the multi-ethnic character of Kosovo, but NATO was ultimately unable to prevent the exodus of hundreds of thousands of ethnic Serbs and Roma from the province. Finally, the Alliance remained committed to the maintenance of Yugoslav sovereignty over Kosovo, although no Western leader ever specified how the province could ever be returned to Belgrade's rule if the majority of its population remained against this idea.

role of the K-For peacekeepers across the border in Kosovo. NATO's initial response was to act within K-For's mandate, inside Kosovo only, by blowing up roads leading to the border to make it less accessible to would-be infiltrators and detain some of them. After the Framework Agreement of the confronting sides in FYROM, a 3,500-strong NATO force had been given the green light to deploy into the country to oversee the disarmament of Albanian rebels. The move came in response to a unanimous vote by the NATO military committee on August 22 to go ahead with the disarmament plan, despite ongoing skirmishes between government forces and the rebels. NATO Supreme Commander in Europe, General Joseph Ralston, gave the activation order for the mission titled 'Essential Harvest'.

However, there has to be a decision soon on the extension and definition of a follow-on military mission. As matters stand, NATO is to leave FYROM around early October, after collecting of some 3,330 NLA weapons and the expiration of the mission's stated 30-day time limit. Even in the best of circumstances, this would leave a serious security vacuum, and one that would probably condemn the 13 August agreement to early failure. NATO's sheer presence has been critical in maintaining a precarious cease-fire. If NATO leaves at this moment, no other force is ready or able to play an equivalent stabilizing role or, more specifically, to ensure protection for vital international civilian officials. International thinking is changing rapidly. Western governments are increasingly acknowledging that some kind of follow-on force and new mandate will be needed. Reaching an agreement on a new NATO mission equipped with a sufficiently vigorous mandate will, more than any other single factor that can be influenced by the West, determine whether there is to be war or peace in FYROM.

Nevertheless, recent violent events in the small and fragile Balkan country support one conclusion. It is imperative for conflict prevention done by international organizations to be long-term, particularly in regions with considerable instabilities because of unresolved territorial and ethnic problems. Once more, FYROM has held on to peace. However, there is a continued need for preventive engagement as long as the region is affected by the conflict in Kosovo.

# V.    CONCLUSIONS


Prevention of violent conflicts in a region as complex and turbulent as the Balkans is becoming urgent and must be adapted to each case. The tools available for conflict prevention are relatively insufficient to meet all of the threats arising in the post-Cold War period. Prevention needs to be considered from the start with the aim to most effectively coordinate all governmental and non-governmental actors that might be involved, in order to avoid any duplication of effort, which could bring about the opposite results from those desired.

One of the main factors is, without any doubt, the clear political will of the international community and organizations or of individual countries to become involved in conflict prevention, and it is obvious that, after all, there are no easy solutions to complex problems, the roots of which are many centuries old.

In the case of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Western political and security organizations such as the EU, OSCE, WEU, and NATO can, and should, act as mediators. The EU should put forward its 'soft security' enforcement potential. Integration into European institutions and the regional approach are the two main 'weapons' at the EU's disposal. It will be very difficult to speak about 'European integration' if the Balkan countries have not, in one way or another, been invited inside European institutions and organizations. From a regional point of view, integration within Western political and security organizations like the ones mentioned above should by all means remain as an open perspective. Until the recent ethnic Albanian crisis in FYROM, the 'regional approach' of the EU was limited to the countries of the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia involved in the Bosnian conflict. Furthermore, it essentially dealt with economic issues. However, it is indisputable at present that the prospect of joining these European institutions and organizations itself constitutes one of the most important conflict-prevention measures. European security might consider a more inclusive approach to FYROM, and avoid inward-looking Europe favoring a security vacuum that could lead to further instability and the rise of ethnic conflicts or nationalist inclinations. The right conditions for a more successful Balkan cooperation also imply a 'top-down' as

well as a 'bottom-up' approach, with a clear response by Western European countries to progressive cooperation in this area. After all, according to the vast majority of political observers, it is impossible to achieve any regional stability in the Balkans without the participation of FYROM.

While the talks on overcoming differences on the name issue still continue, Greece, the only EU and NATO member in the area, has gradually over the last four years become the second largest economic partner and the most important individual investor in FYROM. It is obvious that the two countries have overcome many taboo issues from the past, and are at a very crucial moment in their relations and the long-term stability of their area. A quick and viable solution that would be relatively accepted by both countries should now be given to the only point of dissent that remains between them. Interim names like 'Northern', or 'Nova' (New) Macedonia could be acceptable ones. Everything depends on mutual understanding and tolerance for the common interest of both the Balkan neighbors.

As national identities are already 'rediscovered' in the region, the role of politicians must be to avoid 'ethnic mine-fields' and territorial irredentas that define country-specific and regional security problems and perspectives alike.[204] The escalation of fighting in FYROM, the heart of the southern 'power keg', if accompanied by a brutal crackdown by security forces of the kind that led to the Kosovo war three years ago, could radicalize FYROM's ethnic Albanians, probably repeat the model of shifting coalitions from the northern and central Balkan 'kegs', and carry a greater risk of further internationalization. FYROM is located at the center of the Balkan geopolitical axes. It does not have any seriously devoted political allies among its neighbors. FYROM's economy, army and other state capabilities seem to be too small, weak, and fragile to succeed in a struggle with internal and external enemies at the same time. FYROM is risking much in an armed conflict, and it ideas about a war are not optimistic at all.[205]

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[204] R. Remington, Security Dilemmas in the Post-Communist Balkans: Party-Army Dynamics, Eurobalkans, winter 94/95, No. 17, p. 18.

[205] It has been argued by analysts that in case of an armed conflict, FYROM would be possibly faced with a dilemma like the choice between 'pox and cholera': joining Bulgarians and Albanians, who, if victorious, might divide FYROM between them; or joining Greeks and Serbs, who, if victorious, might want no independent state between them. George Kennan, The Balkan Crisis 1913 & 1993, The New York Review of Books, Vol. XL, No. 13, July 1993, p.7.

FYROM, Albania, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Turkey cover almost the entire Balkan Peninsula which means that another Balkan War could be much worse than the previous two, but it is more than obvious now that problems in ethnic relations cannot be resolved by the use of armed forces. On the contrary, armed forces and violence in general usually become a major part of the problem, not the solution.

Two of the many existing approaches to security are linked, the first one to militarily strong countries, while the second to militarily weak ones. The first is based on the ancient Roman principle '*si vis pacem, para bellum or qui desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum*' (he who desires peace, let him prepare for war). The typical Balkan model of security is still influenced by that principle, but FYROM is very weak to use it in a way similar to those undertaken by most of its neighbors or generally some states of the Balkans (Turkey). On the other hand, optimistic perspectives for a long-lasting peace scenario around FYROM could include a type of security similar to that mostly practiced by smaller European states. This type of security is characterized by a neutral foreign policy, at least as regarding its country's neighbors, relatively weak armed forces, in comparison to those of neighboring states, and stable interethnic relations within the population of the country. In this way, neither FYROM nor other neighboring countries can control the whole area of Macedonia (Aegean, Pirin, or Vardar parts) for a long period of time. Nobody wins, nobody loses. It is unquestionable that war in this region would make the Balkan countries more powerless, and populations would suffer even more than those in Croatia or Bosnia. A widescale Balkan war will endanger the transition to democracy throughout post-communist East Europe, flood Western Europe with refugees and thus endanger what was already decided in the Treaty of Maastricht concerning, and increase neo-nationalist fanatics throughout the continent.

It can be concluded that FYROM could have longer-lasting security by protecting itself with its military weakness, neutrality and stable relations within its multiethnic community. The purpose of FYROM's independence could be to link and not to divide its neighbors, and in this way, make them mutually closer and devoted to peace. This is the way that FYROM could transform its weakness to strength, and become one relatively prosperous and peaceful place in the Balkans.

Security is not always maintained by armies and weapons. Diplomacy that is devoted to conflict prevention and resolution, as well as low-profile internal and external policies are essential for a fragile country like FYROM. Respect and protection of human and civil rights of minorities are also dominant factors in the survivability of a new multi-ethnic nation. This is the only road to a long-lasting peace and stability in FYROM and the only way for the Balkans to gradually drop its reputation as the 'power keg' of Europe. All the countries of the area also need developed economies and stable systems of human rights protected by constitutions and laws.

On the other hand, ethnic minorities in FYROM will never be secure and prosperous unless they develop proper political, social, and economic relationships with majority populations. In this way, security is always mutual for populations and the roles are often changed, especially in the Balkans. Security in a country exists either for everybody or for nobody. All the sides have to work together for the common well being.

The future of FYROM also depends and is based on democratic principles in the civilian sector, as well as positive political control on radical military elements. Under the present circumstances, a genuine solution does not exist that could satisfy all the sides involved in the country, but there are measures, that if undertaken, could prevent further destabilization and crises.

Finally, the author believes that a combination of the following measures could create a climate conductive to peaceful co-existence of all the ethnic minorities and especially the Albanians, within the majority of Slav-Macedonians, and promote the desired survivability of the state of FYROM:

- Creation of a safety zone running alongside the borders (especially those with Albania and with Kosovo). NATO forces are the only reliable and much respected by all that could patrol this zone in order to ensure impartiality

- All military and economic provisions to the rebels should be blocked

- FYROM's territorial integrity has to be guaranteed by the international community rather than being the subject of bilateral negotiations

- All Albanian-speaking subjects should officially renounce extremists among their ranks

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- Above all, FYROM's democratization should extend to fully integrate ethnic Albanians as well other nationalities, which constitute a very high percentage of the country's population. Social, political, and/or economical discrimination against those subjects should be avoided at all costs by the government

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